

Introduction to *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*

Based on the ḥadīth lectures of:

Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Āqil
(Shaykh al-Ḥadīth of Mazāhir ‘Ulūm, Saharanpur, India)

Translated by
Muhammed Talha

CONTENTS

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.....	7
WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT FROM MAWLĀNĀ SAYYID MUḤAMMAD 'ĀQIL	10
FOREWORD.....	11
ABOUT MAWLĀNĀ SAYYID MUḤAMMAD 'ĀQIL.....	15
Commencing Lectures on Wednesday.....	17
MUQADDIMAT 'L-'ILM	19
The Definition of <i>Ḥadīth</i>	20
'Ilm 'l- <i>Ḥadīth</i>	22
<i>Mawḍū'</i>	23
<i>Ghard</i> & <i>Ghāyah</i>	24
<i>Simah</i>	28
Some Terminology Similar to <i>Ḥadīth</i>	29
The Compilation of <i>Ḥadīth</i>	30
Ranks of Compilers.....	32
The Documentation of <i>Ḥadīth</i>	34
<i>Nisbah</i>	40
<i>Martabah</i>	41
<i>Classification</i>	42
Legal status.....	44
MUQADDIMAT 'L-KITĀB	45
ABOUT THE AUTHOR.....	45
Name, Lineage & Origin	45
Date of Birth.....	46
Residence in Baghdad & Transfer to Basra.....	47
His Teachers	47
His Students.....	49
His Family.....	49
His Inclination to <i>Fiqh</i>	50
Visit to <i>Bīr Buḍā'ah</i> and an Academic Finding.....	50
Scholars' Praise of Imām Abū Dāwūd.....	51
The Incident of Sahl ibn 'Abdillāh at-Tustarī.....	52

Imām Abū Dāwūd's School in <i>Fiqh</i>	52
The Schools of <i>Fiqh</i> of the Remaining Authors of the <i>Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah</i>	53
The Factors that Indicate Imām Abū Dāwūd was <i>Ḥanbalī</i>	54
The Followed Imāms and the Non-Followed	56
An Intuition of 'Allāmah 'Abd al-Wahhāb ash-Sha'rānī.....	56
Imām Abū Dāwūd's Selected Narrations.....	57
Imām Abū Dāwūd's Works	59
ABOUT THE BOOK	61
Name & Reason of Naming	61
Purpose of Compilation	62
Era of Compilation.....	62
The Rank of <i>Sunan Abī Dāwūd</i> in Order of Study	62
The Ranks of the Books of <i>Ḥadīth</i>	64
The Order of Ranking Within the <i>Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah</i>	66
<i>Sunan Ibn Mājah</i> & the difference of opinion regarding the sixth of the six books.....	68
Some Distinguishing Features of the <i>Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah</i>	69
The Distinguishing features of <i>Sunan Abī Dāwūd</i>	72
That Which Imām Abū Dāwūd has Remained Silent Upon.....	74
Are there any <i>Thulāthī</i> Narrations in <i>Sunan Abī Dāwūd</i> ?	76
The Presence of <i>Thulāthiyyāt</i> in the <i>Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah</i>	76
The Narrations Criticised by Ibn al-Jawzī	77
Imām Abū Dāwūd's Conditions.....	78
The Transmissions of <i>Sunan Abī Dāwūd</i>	80
Commentaries and Marginal Glosses	82
Etiquettes of the Student	86
Categories of <i>Ḥadīth</i> Compilations	87
'Ilm 'l- <i>Ḥadīth</i> in the Asian Subcontinent	95
<i>Isnād</i> - A Speciality of this Ummah.....	97
The Necessity of Mentioning <i>Isnād</i>	98
My <i>Sanad</i> of <i>Sunan Abī Dāwūd</i>	99

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The science of *ḥadīth* with its multitude of branches and fields, is an extremely vast science. The *muḥaddithūn* gave their lives to this science; studying, teaching, explaining, and writing books on various aspects of it. The beginner is often overwhelmed by its vastness, and thus scholars throughout the ages have written books to facilitate the study of the science of *ḥadīth*.

The book in front of the reader is a translation of the introduction to *Ad-Durr al-Mandūd*, Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad 'Āqil's commentary of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* which is effectively a transcription of his lectures on the *Sunan*. While studying at Mazāhir 'Ulūm, Saharanpur, I observed that this introduction was printed independently of the *sharḥ*, and loaned out to students of the final year from the library. Students were required to study this book, and acquaint themselves with the discussions and concepts within, before their journey into studying the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* and other books of *ḥadīth*.

This preparatory exercise ensured that the students were not overwhelmed by the sheer size of these voluminous works, unable to understand and derive any benefit from them, but rather they were equipped with the necessary tools to maximise the benefit of studying these canonical books.

Having benefitted from this introduction and commentary myself, I had a desire to translate this work of Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad 'Āqil into English. Firstly, as a token of gratitude to my teacher, and secondly, so that students of *ḥadīth* in the western world may also derive benefit from it. Thus, in February 2017 while visiting my teachers in India, I expressed this desire to Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad 'Āqil, and he was extremely pleased and granted permission for the translation of his work.

However, I was unable to begin the work at the time and a few years passed without any attention having been paid to it. I recently decided to start work on the translation and by the grace of Allah, and with the *du'ā*

of Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Āqil, this is the final product in the hands of the reader.

It should be kept in mind that this is originally a transcription of a series of lessons and lectures, adapted to serve as a written commentary. The style however is still indicative of its original oral delivery. I have maintained the structure and style of the original Urdu to the best of my ability. Furthermore, this book was transcribed and prepared in 1390 AH which was exactly fifty years ago. With the influx of new prints of books becoming available, some information becomes inapplicable. Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Āqil himself alludes to this in one place in the footnotes. In a recent conversation with Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Āqil in which I informed him that I had begun translating his work, and it was nearing completion, he informed me of some corrections and additions he had made over the years and had them sent to me. The main text has been modified accordingly.

It is also worthy of noting that the great *muḥaddith* Mawlānā ‘Abd ar-Rashīd Nu‘mānī would teach this introduction to the students of Ma‘had al-Khalīl, Karachi. While teaching the book, he had some questions regarding certain issues, which he posed to Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Āqil. He soon passed away, but Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Āqil wrote a reply and published the questions along with the answers in subsequent editions of *Ad-Durr al-Mandūd* as an addendum to the introduction. Again, the main text will reflect any corrections that were to be made, and some of the answers given will be explained in the footnotes.

There are some explanatory footnotes in the original Urdu which were penned by Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Āqil. They too have been translated for the benefit of the reader and they are marked with (MA).

I would like to thank a dear brother and friend, Mawlānā Haroon Rashid Anis for firstly thoroughly editing this work, for it would not have been as beneficial without his critical eye. Secondly, it was his suggestions and input that formed majority of the footnotes within this work. I feel that I ought to also mention that he started writing the foreword while facing the blessed

Ka‘bah, a day before leaving for Minā, and he thoroughly proofread the manuscript for the last time once he had reached Minā before *Fajr Ṣalāh* on the 8th of *Dhū ‘l-Hijjah*.

Likewise, Mawlānā Usman Veshmia also deserves my gratitude, for he thoroughly reviewed the entire book with me, comparing it with the original Urdu, and providing his valuable input and suggestions along the way. Both of their contributions have proven to be priceless. May Allah increase them in knowledge and goodness, and grant them the best of both worlds.

Similarly, I owe thanks to my parents and teachers, for I am a product of their efforts, sacrifices and nurturing. It was the support and encouragement of my parents that enabled me and afforded me the opportunity to spend time with and study under leading *muḥaddithūn* like Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Āqil, and the late Shaykh Yūnus Jaunpūrī رحمہ اللہ, in whose lessons I learnt a thing or two. I also extend my gratitude to all those who directly or indirectly assisted in making this work possible. My wife requires special thanks for bearing with me while I worked on this project, and my son and siblings for not disturbing me while I worked.

I hope this work assists students of *ḥadīth* in achieving more from their *ḥadīth* studies, whereby they would feel a greater affinity to the *Sunnah* of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, and form a genuine bond of love for the Noble Messenger ﷺ.

Lastly, all errors and misinformation should be attributed to the translator, and not the author or editor. If any errors are found, typographical or factual, I would be grateful to one who would be kind enough to make me aware of them.

Muhammed Talha
8th *Dhū ‘l-Hijjah* 1440
9th August 2019

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

عزیزم مولوی محمد طلحہ سلمہ نے آج بڑی پرست خیردی کہ انہوں نے
"الدر المنصور" کے مقدمہ کا انگریزی ترجمہ کیا ہے۔

اللہ تعالیٰ ان کو جزائے خیر عطا فرمائے اور اسکو قبول فرما کر
باعث خیر و برکت بنائے اور ہم سب کو اخلاص نصیب فرمائے۔

(آمین)

محمد عارف صاحب مدظلہ

سرریزی ایچ بی ۱۳۱۳

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

The Noble Prophet of Allah ﷺ was sent as the perfect example for the entire creation. His every word and action were a manifestation of the revelation of the Almighty Allah. Lady 'Āishah ؓ was asked, "What were the characteristics of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?" She replied, "His characteristics were the embodiment of the Qur'ān".¹ Allah, the Exalted says, 'He does not speak out of (his own) desire. It is but revelation revealed (to him).'²

By the grace of Allah, the Exalted, this practical example of the Qur'ān was not restricted to the time of the Ṣaḥābah only, but was protected by Allah as He had promised,³ and passed from generation to generation, undergoing many major developments and milestones, overcoming challenges from those within the Islamic tradition and even those external to it.

After major developments in the studies of ḥadīth, the six canon works of ḥadīth, *al-Kutub as-Sittah*, or *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*,⁴ took a central position and became the most celebrated works of ḥadīth within the *Ahl 's-Sunnah wa 'l-Jamā'ah*. It would not be an understatement to say that the authors of these works were prepared by Allah, the Almighty, to fulfil a specific role. Before one even reads the biographies of these Imams, just reading their names will demonstrate how these individuals were handpicked for these roles; Muḥammad ibn Ismā'il al-Bukhārī, Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā at-Tirmidhī, Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath Abū Dāwūd as-Sijistānī, Aḥmad ibn Shu'ayb an-Nasa'ī, Muḥammad ibn Yazīd ibn Mājah al-Qazwīnī. We see the first names revolve around two major *maṣādir* (root letters); *ḥamd* (praise) and *salm* (safety). The one who follows the *Sunnah* of the Blessed

¹ Bukhārī, *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, 308.

² Qur'ān, [53:3-4]. Also see: Abū Dāwūd, *as-Sunan*, 3646.

³ See Qur'ān, [15:9], [16:44 & 64], also see: Ibn Hazm, *al-Iḥkām*, vol. 1, pp. 95 & 115.

⁴ See *Muqaddimah Ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ* for a discussion on those who classified the four *Sunan* as *Ṣaḥīḥ* along with the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*.

Prophet ﷺ, and the one who studies these six works will also become an entity worthy of praise and safety.

The following work is a translation by my dear friend and colleague, Mawlānā Muhammed Talha Patel, may Allah bless him and increase him in goodness, of the introduction of *Ad-Durr al-Mandūd 'alā Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, the work of Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad 'Āqil ibn al-Muḥaddith Mawlānā Ḥakīm Muḥammad Ayyūb Saharanpūrī, current *Shaykh al-Ḥadīth* of Mazāhir 'Ulūm, Saharanpur. Despite all of my deficiencies, this student was honoured to have assisted in editing the work, reviewing the translation before its publication and is forever grateful to have been given this opportunity.

The final year of the *Dars-e-Nizami* in English speaking countries tends to compromise the study of the six canon books along with additional works, with exceptions. Although no breath is wasted in the commentary of the *aḥādīth* within these books, little attention is given to the authors of these works, their methodologies, styles and the distinctive features of each book. This work aims to fill that void for the student going into the final year of the 'Ālim program and acts as a reference for the teacher.

The work of Imām Abū Dāwūd is evidently the work of a master of multiple sciences. Through the pages of his *Sunan*, his expertise shines in the fields of *riwāyah al-ḥadīth*, 'ilal, *gharīb*, *fiqh*, *tafsīr*, *lughah* and *tārīkh*. The technical placement of the chapters and the individual *aḥādīth* are a testimony of a very thoughtful procedure adopted by an extremely wise author. Every single "Qāl Abū Dāwūd" serves a great purpose. He was a man who had great confidence in his work, to such an extent, he claimed, and rightfully so, "I am unaware of any work after the Qur'ān more befitting to study than this work."¹

'Ulamā' throughout the ages have showered praise on the author and his work. Ibn al-Qayyim describing the work says, "[It is a] judge for the people

of Islam, a conclusive evidence in the times of argumentation and disagreements, the just seek its rulings and the experts are satisfied with its law."²

Ḥujjat al-Islām Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī said, "The *mujtahid* is not required to search for the individual *aḥādīth* that are scattered and spread, but it is sufficient for him to have an authentic corrected work that gathers the *aḥādīth* of rulings, such as the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd."²

I beg Allah to accept this work and make it a means of the reader gaining an understanding of the *Sunan* of Imām Abū Dāwūd, and ultimately the *ḥadīth* of the blessed Prophet ﷺ.

Haroon Rashid Anis

The Noble City of Makkah,
Yawm at-Tarwiyah, 8th Dhū 'l-Hijjah 1440
Friday 9th August 2019

¹ Abū Dāwūd, *Risālah al-Imām Abī Dāwūd as-Sijistānī ilā ahl Makkah fī Waṣfī Sunanihī*, p. 46.

¹ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Tahdhīb as-Sunan*, p. 94.

² Al-Ghazālī, *Al-Mustasfā*, vol. 4, p. 7.

Mawlānā Sayyid MuḤammad 'Āqil ibn al-Muḥaddith Mawlānā Ḥakīm MuḤammad Ayyūb Saharanpūrī was born in Saharanpur on Thursday the 9th of *Sha'bān* 1359 AH (corresponding to 12th September 1940 CE). Keeping in line with the family custom, he initiated the memorisation of the Qur'ān at the Jāmi' Masjid of Saharanpur on the 23rd of *Ṣafar* 1366 AH, and completed on the 19th of *Dhū 'l-Ḥijjah* 1369 AH. Thereafter, he enrolled at Mazāhir 'Ulūm, Saharanpur in 1372 AH and completed his entire studies at this seminary, graduating in 1380 AH.

He studied *ḥadīth* with Shaykh Zakariyyā Kāndhalwī, Mawlānā Manzūr Aḥmad Khan, Mawlānā As'adullāh Rāmpūrī, and Mawlānā Amīr Aḥmad Kāndhalwī.

After completing a one-year course in various sciences, he became an assistant teacher at Mazāhir 'Ulūm in 1381 AH, and was appointed as a teacher in 1382 AH. In 1386 AH he was appointed as a lecturer of *ḥadīth* and taught *Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ*. The next year, in Shawwāl 1387 AH he was appointed as a lecturer of *dawrat al-ḥadīth* and taught the entire *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* for the first time. He continued to teach *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* for a total of fifty years until 1438/2017, when he assumed the position of Shaykh al-Ḥadīth after the demise of Shaykh Yūnus Jaunpūrī. He has been teaching *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* since 2017. He has also been teaching *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī* since 1988. Until 2017, he taught the entire book, and since assuming the position of Shaykh al-Ḥadīth, he teaches the first half of *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī* along with the entire *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. He is considered to be a master in the field of 'ilmu *dirayat 'l-ḥadīth*.

Mawlānā Sayyid MuḤammad 'Āqil enjoyed a very close relationship with Shaykh Zakariyyā. He assisted Shaykh Zakariyyā in the preparation of *Lāmi' ad-Darārī*, and after its completion, was fortunate enough to privately study the entire *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* with Shaykh Zakariyyā during his first year of teaching it. He also assisted Shaykh Zakariyyā in the compilation of *Faḍā'il-e-Durūd Sharīf*, *Juz' Ḥajjah al-Wadā' wa 'Umurāt an-Nabī*, and *Al-Abwāb wa 't-Tarājim*. He was also the son-in-law of Shaykh Zakariyyā, and a spiritual

¹ See also: 'Ulamā' Mazāhir 'Ulūm Sahāranbūr wa Injāzātuhum al-'Ilmiyyah wa 't-Ta'lifiyyah, 3:425.

successor.

His works include:

- *Ta'rif Wajiz 'an Jāmi'ah Mazāhir 'Ulūm Sahāranbūr* - A concise introduction in the Arabic language to Mazāhir 'Ulūm, its inception, faculties, and notable scholars.
- *Al-Hall al-Mufhim li Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* - The lecture notes of Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī that were penned by Mawlānā Yaḥyā Kāndhalwī. Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad 'Āqil annotated these notes, and explained them.
- *Muqaddimah al-Kawkab ad-Durrī* - This brief introduction was prepared under the instruction of Shaykh Zakariyyā. It provided an insight into the life of Imām Tirmidhī and his *Jāmi'*.
- *Al-Fayḍ as-Samā'ī 'alā Sunan an-Nasa'ī* - The lecture notes of Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī that were penned by Mawlānā Yaḥyā Kāndhalwī. Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad 'Āqil has extensive footnotes on the original notes, and has been published in three large volumes.
- *Ad-Durr al-Mandūd 'alā Sunan Abī Dāwūd* - A six volume Urdu commentary of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* which is a transcription of his lectures on the *Sunan*.

His lectures of *ḥadīth* are very popular, due to his expertise in explaining even the most difficult concepts pertaining to the *ḥadīth*. His lecture is well-researched and well-structured, a manifestation of his expertise in the field.

Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad 'Āqil is extremely humble and leads a simple life. He is courteous, gentle, and extremely hospitable to guests. He is known amongst students to be lenient and soft-natured and concerns himself with the welfare of students. He was once banned from entering the exam hall, as he would go out of his way to assist students in reaching a correct answer. A student from Malaysia was once hospitalised, and Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad 'Āqil went to visit him in hospital.

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الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على سيد المرسلين محمد وآله وأصحابه أجمعين
اللهم إني أحمدك وأستعينك¹

Commencing Lectures on Wednesday²

It has remained the practice and habit of our elders and teachers to commence teaching and initiate the lessons of a subject on a Wednesday. However, there is a need to establish the origins and analyse the proofs of this practice.

'Allāmah Zarnūjī, the student of the author of *al-Hidāyah* writes in his book *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* regarding the practice of his teacher 'Allāmah Marghīnānī, "Our teacher, ash-Shaykh al-Imām Burhān ad-Dīn (may Allah have mercy on him) used to postpone the commencing lecture until Wednesday. He used to cite a *ḥadīth* with his uninterrupted chain as a proof for this practice:

"ما من شيء بدئ يوم الأربعاء إلا وقد تم."

However, some *muḥaddithūn* have held reservations with regards to this *ḥadīth*. 'Allāmah Sakhāwī writes in *Al-Maqāṣid al-Ḥasanah*, "I never found any origins for this." He then objects to the mentioned *ḥadīth*, citing a narration from *Ṭabarānī*³ in which Wednesday has been taken to be the interpretation of 'يوم نحس مستمر' (a day of evil omen and continuous calamity).⁴

Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī replies to the objection of 'Allāmah Sakhāwī by stating that the observation of 'Allāmah Sakhāwī is based on his knowledge. He goes on to say that a jurist and *muḥaddith* like 'Allāmah Marghīnānī narrating this

¹ It is my practice to read this *du'ā'* every day before commencing my lesson. This practice is derived from the practice of Bilāl رضي الله عنه, the *mu'adh'dhin* of the Prophet ﷺ which is mentioned in the narration in باب الأذان فوق المنارة. *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* (519). MA

² This entire discussion has been mentioned by Mawlānā 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Lakhnawī in *Al-Fawā'id al-Bahiyah fī Tarājim al-Ḥanafīyah* under the entry of the author of *al-Hidāyah*, 'Alī ibn Abī Bakr ibn 'Abd al-Jalīl al-Farghānī al-Marghīnānī, p. 182 - *Ittihad Book Depot*. MA

³ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ* (797) 1:243.

⁴ *Qur'ān* 54:19

successor.

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اللهم إني أحمدك وأستعينك¹

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Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī replies to the objection of 'Allāmah Sakhāwī by stating that the observation of 'Allāmah Sakhāwī is based on his knowledge. He goes on to say that a jurist and *muḥaddith* like 'Allāmah Marghīnānī narrating this

¹ It is my practice to read this *du'ā'* every day before commencing my lesson. This practice is derived from the practice of Bilāl رضي الله عنه, the *mu'adh'dhin* of the Prophet ﷺ which is mentioned in the narration in *باب الأذان فوق المنارة Sunan Abī Dāwūd* (519). MA

² This entire discussion has been mentioned by Mawlānā 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Lakhnawī in *Al-Fawā'id al-Bahiyyah fī Tarājim al-Ḥanafīyyah* under the entry of the author of *al-Hidāyah*, 'Alī ibn Abī Bakr ibn 'Abd al-Jalīl al-Farghānī al-Marghīnānī, p. 182 - *Ittiḥad Book Depot*. MA

³ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ* (797) 1:243.

⁴ *Qur'ān* 54:19

ḥadīth with his uninterrupted chain of narration and practicing upon it is enough to prove its authenticity, even if it is not found in the famous collections of *ḥadīth*. Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī further says that the narration of *Ṭabarānī* mentioned by 'Allāmah Sakhāwī is weak, and even if we suppose it is *ṣaḥīḥ*, it would mean that this day is unfortunate for the disbelievers as punishment was meted out to them on this day. As for the believers, it would undoubtedly be a blessed day for them.

Some scholars have justified the practice of 'Allāmah Marghīnānī and other earlier scholars with a *ḥadīth* from *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* which states:

"إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ النُّورَ يَوْمَ الْأَرْبَعَاءِ."

It is known that knowledge is light and thus, the reason for commencing lectures on a Wednesday is evident.

Whatever has been mentioned thus far has been penned by Mawlānā 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Lakhnawī. I recently came to know of another *ḥadīth* which states that knowledge should be sought on a Monday for there is ease in this. Allah is most knowledgeable with regards to the authenticity of this *ḥadīth*.¹

¹ I recently heard of this narration from Shaykh al-Ḥadīth Mawlānā Yūnus Jaunpūrī, which suggests that the most suitable practice would be to commence lectures on a Monday, as it eases learning. The words of the *ḥadīth* are:

"اطلبوا العلم يوم الإثنين فإنه ميسر لصاحبه."

This has been narrated by Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣfahānī in *Tārīkh Iṣfahān* with his chain of narration to Anas رضي الله عنه under the entry of Ṣāliḥ ibn Sahl ibn al-Minhāl. MA

MUQADDIMAT 'L-'ILM

It has been the practice of scholars and teachers to mention the fundamental concepts (*mabādī*) and certain premises (*muqaddimāt*) of the science in which the book under study has been authored, before actually commencing the study of the book. The scholars of logic have explained that it is of paramount importance to be familiarised with the premises (*muqaddimat 'l-'ilm*) of a certain science prior to studying it.

It should be known that the *muqaddimāt* are of two types; *muqaddimat 'l-'ilm* and *muqaddimat 'l-kitāb*.¹ The difference between the two has been outlined in *Mukhtaṣar al-Ma'ānī* and need not be mentioned at this time. However, *muqaddimat 'l-'ilm* deals with the science being studied and *muqaddimat 'l-kitāb* deals with the book under study.

Some scholars mention three things with regards to *muqaddimat 'l-'ilm*; the definition (*hadd*), the subject matter (*mawḍū'*), and the goals (*gharḍ*). Others mention eight things which are known as *ar-ru'ūs 'th-thamāniyah*, and many enumerate ten.²

إن مبادي كل فن عشرة	الحد والموضوع ثم الثمرة
وفضله ونسبة والواضع	والاسم الاستمداد حكم الشارع
مسائل والبعض ببعض اكتفى	ومن درى الجميع حاز الشرفا

Know, the fundamental concepts of every science are ten;

The definition, the subject matter and the outcomes.

Its virtue, relation and the originator,

The name, the support and the ruling.

The topics, and some suffice on some (of these).

But the one who is cognizant of all has attained distinction.

Our teacher Shaykh Zakariyyā رحمته الله used to mention twenty concepts

¹ Earlier scholars would only discuss *muqaddimat 'l-'ilm*. *Muqaddimat 'l-kitāb* was later invented by 'Allāmah Taftāzānī, as can be understood from *Al-Muṭawwal Sharḥ Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ*. The reason for this addition can also be understood from this book. MA

² Abū 'l-'Irfān Muḥammad ibn 'Alī aṣ-Ṣabbān expressed these couplets in his book *Ḥāshiyah 'alā Sharḥ as-Sullam li 'l-Mallawī*.

under the discussions of *muqaddimat 'l-'ilm* and *muqaddimat 'l-kitāb*. He outlined nine points under *muqaddimat 'l-'ilm*;

1. *Hadd*: the definition
2. *Mawḍū'*: the subject matter
3. *Gharḍ*: the objectives
4. *Ism*: the name of the science
5. *Mudawwin*: the compiler
6. *Nisbah*: its relation to other subjects
7. *Martabah*: its rank
8. *Qismah & Tabwīb*: distribution and division

These eight are known as *ar-ru'ūs 'th-thamāniyah*. The scholars of Islam then added a ninth point known as the legal ruling [*ḥukm 'sh-shāri'*]. Shaykh Zakariyyā used to say that the same are relevant to *muqaddimat 'l-kitāb* except for the definition as the book does not have a definition, and the subject matter as the subject matter of the science and the book are one and the same. Shaykh used to mention a further four miscellaneous concepts:

1. *Nusakh*: manuscripts of the book
2. *Shurūḥ & Hawāshī*: commentaries and marginal glosses
3. *Sanad*: chain of transmission
4. *Ādāb*: etiquettes for the student

The Definition of Ḥadīth

It is worth mentioning that the science of *ḥadīth* (*'ilm 'l-ḥadīth*) and *ḥadīth* are two distinct concepts. You have already studied the science of rhetoric (*'ilm 'l-balāghah*) and you are aware that *'ilm 'l-balāghah* (rhetoric) and *balāghah* (eloquence) are two distinct concepts. Hence, both will be defined differently. The science of rhetoric (*'ilm 'l-balāghah*) will be defined as that science which comprises of the part of rhetoric that deals with the verbal expression of concepts and content (*'ilm 'l-ma'ānī*), and that part of Arab rhetoric that deals with metaphorical language (*'ilm 'l-bayān*). Eloquence (*balāghah*) will be defined as the ability to communicate aptly according to the situation and circumstance.

In the same way, we have two very different concepts under discussion; *ḥadīth*, and the science of *ḥadīth* (*'ilm 'l-ḥadīth*). The science of *ḥadīth* is of two types; the science of *ḥadīth* with respect to transmission (*riwāyah*), and the science of *ḥadīth* with respect to comprehension (*dirāyah*).

The book we are about to study and the rest of the books studied in *dawrat al-ḥadīth* are all in the science of *ḥadīth* with respect to transmission. Therefore, we will discuss this branch of *ḥadīth*. However, it would be appropriate to firstly be acquainted with the definition of *ḥadīth*.

Ḥadīth comprises of the sayings (*aqwāl*), actions (*af'āl*), states (*aḥwāl*) and tacit approvals (*taqrīrāt*) of the Messenger ﷺ. *Taqrīrāt* refers to the instances when a companion did something in the presence of the Messenger ﷺ, and the Messenger ﷺ did not disapprove of that action, neither at that instance nor at a later time.

Anything that is established by means of *taqrīr* will be said to be established from *ḥadīth*. The reason for this is that it is impossible for something impermissible to occur in the presence of the Messenger ﷺ, or that he should come to know of something impermissible taking place, and despite knowing, he does not disapprove of it.¹ It can then be established that in the same way the sayings and actions of the Messenger ﷺ are proofs, the silence of the Messenger ﷺ is also considered to be a proof. Rather, it would be apt to say that everything about the Messenger ﷺ was a proof. *Subḥānallāh!* What a status the prophets have, that every aspect of their lives is a proof. Therefore, everything that is established by means of the *taqrīr* of the Messenger ﷺ will be said to be established from *ḥadīth*.

Taqrīr is included in the definition of *ḥadīth* by the consensus of the *muḥaddithūn* and *uṣūliyyūn*. However, conditions (*aḥwāl*) of the Messenger ﷺ are of two types; the optional and the non-optional (physical features, height etc.). For example, the snoring of the Prophet ﷺ whilst he would sleep was non-optional. Thus, in the nomenclature of the *muḥaddithūn*, both

¹ An example of this is the story of Mūsā ﷺ and Khidr which is mentioned in *Sūrat al-Kahf*. Mūsā ﷺ promised Khidr he would not comment on Khidr's actions, but he would remain silent and observe. However, when Mūsā ﷺ saw Khidr doing such things that were apparently against the Shari'ah, he could not remain silent, and immediately commented. MA

types are included in the definition of *ḥadīth*. Rather, everything attributed to the Messenger ﷺ is classed as *ḥadīth*. According to the *uṣūliyyūn*, the second type, i.e., non-optional features are not included in the definition of *ḥadīth*, as the *uṣūliyyūn* are only concerned with those things that serve as legislative proofs and form legislation. Physical features have no pertinence to legal rulings and thus, do not form legislative proofs.

This is the definition of *ḥadīth*. Now we shall define 'ilm 'l-*ḥadīth*. Firstly, 'ilmu riwayat 'l-*ḥadīth* and thereafter, 'ilmu dirayat 'l-*ḥadīth*.

'Ilm 'l-*Ḥadīth*

A famous definition of 'ilm 'l-*ḥadīth* as documented by 'Allāmah Kirmānī and 'Allāmah 'Aynī is:

"هو علم يعرف به أقوال النبي ﷺ وأفعاله وأحواله."

It is such a science through which, the sayings, actions and affairs of the Messenger ﷺ are recognised.

Imām Suyūṭī objected that this definition is ambiguous.¹ This objection is valid because the said definition is also true of all books of *Sīrah*, whether they be in Arabic or Urdu, or whether the chains of narration be mentioned or not. Imām Suyūṭī expounds and aptly defines 'ilm 'l-*ḥadīth* as:

"هو علم يشتمل على أقوال النبي ﷺ وأفعاله وروايتها وضبطها وتحرير ألفاظها."

'Ilm 'l-*ḥadīth* is that science which comprises of the sayings and actions of the Messenger ﷺ and their transmission with due regard to accuracy in their capture and formulation of their wordings.

Perhaps Imām Suyūṭī omitted *aḥwāl* of the Messenger ﷺ for the sake of brevity. Although *taqrīr* is included in the generic definition of *ḥadīth*, it has not been mentioned in this definition. It may be said that *taqrīrāt* can be included in the actions of the Messenger ﷺ as *taqrīrāt* are tacit approvals and an absence of disapproval, which is technically an action.

Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar defines 'ilmu dirayat 'l-*ḥadīth* as:

"معرفة القواعد المعرفة بحال الراوي والمروي."

The knowledge of the principles which acquaints [one] with the status and rank of the narrator and the narration, i.e., is the narrator or narration sound or weak, accepted or rejected. Imām Suyūṭī mentions this definition in the form of a couplet in his *Alfiyyah*:

علم الحديث ذو قوانين تحد يدري بها أحوال متن وسند
فذلك الموضوع والمقصود أن يعرف المقبول والمردود

The definition [*ḥadd*], subject matter [*mawḍū'*] and objectives of 'ilm 'l-*ḥadīth* have been captured in these two couplets. 'Ilm 'l-*ḥadīth* is the name of the few principles by which the condition of the sanad [chain of narrators] and matn [text] is known. Both form the subject matter of the science. The objective is to be acquainted with the accepted and rejected narrations, i.e., those narrations that are worthy of serving as legislative proofs, and those that are not.

Mawḍū'

'Allāmah Kirmānī was a great *Muḥaddith* who lived much prior to the likes of Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar and 'Allāmah 'Aynī. In his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, he mentions the *mawḍū'* of 'ilm 'l-*ḥadīth* as:

"هو ذات الرسول ﷺ."

The subject matter of 'ilm 'l-*ḥadīth* is the being of the Messenger ﷺ. Imām Suyūṭī objects to this definition and says that his teacher 'Allāmah Kāfiyājī would be perplexed as to how 'Allāmah Kirmānī had stated the being of the Messenger ﷺ as the subject matter, when the being of the Messenger ﷺ is the subject matter of medicine. The Messenger ﷺ was a human and the human anatomy forms the subject matter of the medical sciences.

Subsequent scholars, expressed their surprise as to how after having mentioned this objection, 'Allāmah Suyūṭī remained silent, and thus endorsed this objection. However, this objection is unsubstantial as the being of

¹ Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān ibn Sa'd al-Kāfiyājī al-Ḥanafī (788-879 AH). He was known as Kāfiyājī because of his extreme love for the *Kāfiyah* of Ibn al-Ḥājjib, and the numerous times he studied and taught it. His student, Imām Suyūṭī describes him as 'the teacher of the world in the rational sciences.' See *Al-Fawā'id al-Bahiyyah fī Tarājim al-Ḥanafīyyah*, p. 220.

the Messenger ﷺ has two aspects; his human essence and his prophetic essence. 'Allāmah Kirmānī intended the latter and not the former. It is evident that his prophetic essence has no bearing with the medical sciences.

Shaykh Zakariyyā opines in the introduction to his *Awjaz al-Masālik* that the essence and being of the Messenger ﷺ is the subject matter of 'ilm 'l-ḥadīth generically. However, as there are two branches of 'ilm 'l-ḥadīth, 'ilmu riwayat 'l-ḥadīth is specific and thus requires a more specific subject matter. Therefore, Shaykh Zakariyyā mentions that the *mawḍū'* of 'ilmu riwayat 'l-ḥadīth is:

"الروايات والمرويات من حيث الاتصال والانقطاع."

Narrations with regards to being uninterrupted and interrupted.

Gharḍ & Ghāyah

The *gharḍ* [objective] is the reason for which an action is carried out and the *ghāyah* [outcome] is the consequence of that action. Thus, if the outcome is desired and intended by the doer of the action, then it is both a *gharḍ* and a *ghāyah*, and if it is not desired, it will solely be a *ghāyah*. Therefore, *gharḍ* is specific and *ghāyah* is general. For example, a businessman trades for profit. He will sometimes gain a profit from his trade and sometimes incur a loss. This loss incurred can be described as *ghāyah* [outcome], but it will not be said to be a *gharḍ* [objective].

Shaykh Zakariyyā would mention three objectives in his lectures;

1. To be the recipient of all those rewards and glad tidings that have been mentioned in the ḥadīth regarding those that learn and teach ḥadīth. For example:

- i. 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd ؓ narrates that the Messenger ﷺ said,

"نضر الله امرأ سمع مقالتي فوعاها وأداها فرب حامل فقه غير فقيه ورب حامل فقه إلى من هو أفقه منه."

"May Allah beautify a man who hears a saying of mine, remembers it, and conveys it. Many a carrier of *fiqh* has no understanding, and many a carrier of *fiqh* carries the *fiqh* to one who has more understanding than him."

In another narration:

"فرب مبلغ أوعى له من سامع."

"Many a recipient of knowledge understands it better than the one who has heard it."

A point that can be noted from this ḥadīth is that some students surpass their teachers in understanding and memorisation. Some scholars have written while commentating on the above ḥadīth that whoever sincerely pursues the knowledge of ḥadīth, walks with a radiance and glow on their face. I equate this to the verse of the Qur'ān regarding the people of paradise:

﴿تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ﴾ (المطففين: ٢٤)

"You will recognise the glamor of bliss on their faces." If a student of ḥadīth is found to be devoid of this quality, then it is a sign of a deficiency in their pursuit or that their pursuit is not sincere.

- ii. It has also been reported from 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said,

"إن أولى الناس بي يوم القيامة أكثرهم عليّ صلاة."

"Verily, the closest people to me on the Day of Judgement will be the ones who sent the most salutations upon me."

Ibn Hibbān says that this is a clear indication to the fact that the people of ḥadīth will enjoy the closest proximity to the Prophet ﷺ on the Day of Judgement, as it is these people who excessively send salutations upon the Prophet ﷺ by reciting it and writing it.

- iii. 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās ؓ narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said,

"اللهم ارحم خلفائي."

The companions asked, "يا رسول الله، ومن خلفائك؟"

The Prophet ﷺ replied, "الذين يروون أحاديثي ويعلمونها الناس."

In this narration, the Prophet ﷺ referred to those that busy themselves in the teaching and learning of ḥadīth as his successors and deputies,

¹ *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī, Ibn Hibbān.*

and additionally he prayed to Allah to shower His mercy upon them.¹
What greater virtue can there be than this?

In summary, we study *ḥadīth* to become the intended recipients of all these glad tidings mentioned in the *ḥadīth*.

N.B. The student of *ḥadīth* should not become haughty, proud or complacent after learning of the virtues of those who study *ḥadīth*. Rather, they should instil within themselves the quality of humility. Shaykh Zakariyyā رحمه الله was a leading *muḥaddith* of his time. He spent his life devoted to the field of *ḥadīth* and writing commentaries on the books of *ḥadīth*. Despite this, he writes in the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī* while commenting on the ranks of the people of *ḥadīth*, "The likes of us are not *muḥaddithūn* and are not worthy of being called *muḥaddith*. We are merely called *muḥaddith* because of our pre-occupation with *ḥadīth*. In reality, we are merely beginners."

2. The second objective of studying *ḥadīth* is that the basis of *dīn* and *Sharī'ah* is the Qur'ān, and the Qur'ān mentions principles and fundamentals without expounding and explaining particulars and details. The *ḥadīth* is a commentary of the Qur'ān and its compendious concepts. Therefore, neither can the Qur'ān be totally understood, nor can one correctly apply and practice upon it without the *ḥadīth*. Thus, we study *ḥadīth* to understand and practice upon the Qur'ān.
3. Shaykh Zakariyyā رحمه الله used to mention that every believer loves the Prophet ﷺ or claims to love the Prophet ﷺ. Thus, the Prophet ﷺ is our beloved and every detail of the beloved is dear to a lover. The *ḥadīth* are the words of the Prophet ﷺ and our love for him necessitates the study and teaching of *ḥadīth*. To derive pleasure from the speech of the beloved is an objective in and of itself.² The saying is very famous:

من أحب شيئاً أكثر من ذكره

4. The fourth objective is one that our teacher, Mawlānā Amīr Aḥmad Saab

¹ Narrated by Ṭabarānī in *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*.

² Shaykh Zakariyyā used to say that if we were to suppose there was no benefit derived and no reward obtained from studying *ḥadīth*, this objective alone, i.e., the *ḥadīth* are the words of the beloved and the lover finds joy in the words of the beloved, should be sufficient to encourage one to study *ḥadīth*. MA

used to mention:

"معرفة كيفية الاقتداء بالنبي ﷺ."

We study *ḥadīth* to acquaint ourselves with the manner of emulating the ways of the Prophet ﷺ. I have made an observation that this very objective can be derived from the opening lines of the *khutbah* of *Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābiḥ*.¹ The author of *Miftāḥ as-Sa'adah* has echoed the same sentiments in the following words:

"التحلي بالآداب النبوية والتوقي عما يكرهه وينهاه."

5. The fifth objective is that which has been mentioned by the author of *Al-Manhal al-'Adhb al-Mawrūd Sharḥ Sunan al-Imām Abī Dāwūd*:

"الاحتراز عن الخطأ في الانتساب إلى النبي ﷺ."

We study *ḥadīth* to protect ourselves from falsely attributing anything to the Prophet ﷺ, for it is only the scholars of *ḥadīth* that have the ability to truly ascertain whether a statement is correctly or falsely attributed to the Prophet ﷺ.

6. Scholars have mentioned that every science has a certain effect. For example, the effect of the science of logic is that it empowers the one who studies it with the skill of articulation. Similarly, if a person was to study *ḥadīth* with sincerity, devotion and love, the qualities of companionship would be borne within them. This is because the companions reached their rank of companionship by means of a prolonged company of the Prophet ﷺ and a close observation of his ways. The student of *ḥadīth* is constantly engrossed in reading and studying the qualities and attributes of the Prophet ﷺ, so how is it possible that they not be influenced by it? They have effectively attained companionship.
7. A common objective of all sacred knowledge that is mentioned:

الفوز بسعادة الدارين

N.B. There is no contradiction in the objectives mentioned above and they

¹ أما بعد؛ فإن التمسك بهديه لا يستتب إلا بالافتقار لما صدر من مشكاته، والاعتصام بحبل الله لا يتم إلا ببيان كشفه

The objective mentioned by Mawlānā Amīr Aḥmad Saab can be understood from the first part of this sentence and the second objective mentioned by Shaykh Zakariyyā can be understood from the second part of the sentence. MA

are all the fruits of pre-occupation with the blessed *ḥadīth* that are attained proportionate to effort and capability, by those who occupy themselves with *ḥadīth*. A single thing may carry many benefits simultaneously.

Simah

The name of the science and cause for the particular name. The name of this science is 'ilm 'l-*ḥadīth*. The question arises, why is *ḥadīth* called *ḥadīth*? Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar mentions two reasons:

1. The meaning of *ḥadīth* is something that is occurrent (*ḥādith*). Allah is eternal (*qadīm*) in respect to His being and attributes and therefore, the speech of Allah (the Qur'ān) is also *qadīm*. In contrast to this, the being of the Prophet ﷺ is *ḥādith* and therefore, his speech is also *ḥādith*. For this reason, the speech of the Prophet ﷺ is called *ḥadīth*.
2. *Ḥadīth* literally means speech and conversation. It is therefore called *ḥadīth* because it consists of the Prophet ﷺ's speech. It can be objected that the *ḥadīth* is not only the speech, but also consists of the qualities and actions of the Prophet ﷺ. The answer will be given that the qualities and actions are also included within the term *ḥadīth* because the overwhelming majority of *aḥādīth* are the statements of the Prophet ﷺ.
3. A third reason that has been mentioned by some scholars is that the term *ḥadīth* is not an invented term but rather, a derived one that has been derived from a verse of the Qur'ān. The statements of the Prophet ﷺ are an explanation of the religion and the explaining of religious matters has been expressed using the word '*taḥdīth*' in *Sūrat ad-Duḥā* (which is derived from the same root letters as *ḥadīth*).

﴿وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ﴾ (الضحى: ١١)

The 'favour' mentioned in this verse has been interpreted as religion as it has been mentioned in various other verses.¹ Thus, the term *ḥadīth* has

﴿وَأَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ﴾ البقرة: ٢٣١

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي﴾ المائدة: ٣

In the two verses above, Allah has referred to the religion as a favour. MA

been coined from the word '*taḥdīth*' mentioned in the verse. The aforementioned verse is actually linked to a previous verse:

﴿وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَى﴾ (الضحى: ٧)

The summary of this verse is that He found you unaware so He granted you knowledge and acquaintance. So, go forth and convey this knowledge before the people. This conveying of knowledge is what formed the *ḥadīth*, and thus, the term *ḥadīth* was taken from the word '*taḥdīth*' mentioned in the verse.

Some Terminology Similar to *Ḥadīth*

It should be noted that the words *ḥadīth*, *khavar*, *athar* and *sunnah* are very similar. Are they synonymous? These are words used by the *muḥaddithūn* and *uṣūliyyūn* alike as you have already studied in *Nūr al-Anwār* and *Sharḥ an-Nukhbah*.

Majority of the *muḥaddithūn* opine that *ḥadīth* and *khavar* are synonymous. However, they differed in regards to the definition of *ḥadīth*. Some defined it as the sayings and conditions of the Prophet ﷺ, while others included the statements of the companions in this definition, and some also included the statements of the *tābi'ūn*. Some *muḥaddithūn* are of the opinion that there is a difference between *ḥadīth* and *khavar*.

"الحديث ما جاء عن النبي ﷺ والخبر ما جاء عن غيره."

Some *muḥaddithūn* state that *ḥadīth* is specific whereas *khavar* is general.

"الحديث ما جاء عن النبي ﷺ والخبر ما جاء عن النبي ﷺ وعن غيره."

As for the difference between *ḥadīth* and *sunnah*, some scholars have said they are synonymous. A second opinion is that *ḥadīth* is specific to the statements of the Prophet ﷺ whilst *sunnah* is general and can be used for the statements, actions and conditions of the Prophet ﷺ.

The term *athar* has been used by the *muḥaddithūn* for both *marfū'* and *mawqūf* narrations. Thus, Imām Ṭaḥāwī named his book *Sharḥ Ma'ānī 'l-Āthār* and he has mentioned both *marfū'* and *mawqūf* narrations in it. Some

¹ The complete name of the work as mentioned by Imām Ṭaḥāwī himself in the said book:

شرح معاني الآثار المختلفة المروية عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في الأحكام - (كتاب الحج في فتح رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مكة عنده)

are all the fruits of pre-occupation with the blessed *ḥadīth* that are attained proportionate to effort and capability, by those who occupy themselves with *ḥadīth*. A single thing may carry many benefits simultaneously.

Simah

The name of the science and cause for the particular name. The name of this science is 'ilm 'l-*ḥadīth*. The question arises, why is *ḥadīth* called *ḥadīth*? Ḥāfiẓ ibn Hajar mentions two reasons:

1. The meaning of *ḥadīth* is something that is occurrent (*ḥādith*). Allah is eternal (*qadīm*) in respect to His being and attributes and therefore, the speech of Allah (the Qur'ān) is also *qadīm*. In contrast to this, the being of the Prophet ﷺ is *ḥādith* and therefore, his speech is also *ḥādith*. For this reason, the speech of the Prophet ﷺ is called *ḥadīth*.
2. *Ḥadīth* literally means speech and conversation. It is therefore called *ḥadīth* because it consists of the Prophet ﷺ's speech. It can be objected that the *ḥadīth* is not only the speech, but also consists of the qualities and actions of the Prophet ﷺ. The answer will be given that the qualities and actions are also included within the term *ḥadīth* because the overwhelming majority of *aḥādīth* are the statements of the Prophet ﷺ.
3. A third reason that has been mentioned by some scholars is that the term *ḥadīth* is not an invented term but rather, a derived one that has been derived from a verse of the Qur'ān. The statements of the Prophet ﷺ are an explanation of the religion and the explaining of religious matters has been expressed using the word '*taḥdīth*' in *Sūrat ad-Duḥā* (which is derived from the same root letters as *ḥadīth*).

﴿وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ﴾ (الضحى: ١١)

The 'favour' mentioned in this verse has been interpreted as religion as it has been mentioned in various other verses.¹ Thus, the term *ḥadīth* has

﴿وَأَذْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ﴾ البقرة: ٢٣١

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي﴾ المائدة: ٣

In the two verses above, Allah has referred to the religion as a favour. MA

been coined from the word '*taḥdīth*' mentioned in the verse. The aforementioned verse is actually linked to a previous verse:

﴿وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَى﴾ (الضحى: ٧)

The summary of this verse is that He found you unaware so He granted you knowledge and acquaintance. So, go forth and convey this knowledge before the people. This conveying of knowledge is what formed the *ḥadīth*, and thus, the term *ḥadīth* was taken from the word '*taḥdīth*' mentioned in the verse.

Some Terminology Similar to Ḥadīth

It should be noted that the words *ḥadīth*, *khavar*, *athar* and *sunnah* are very similar. Are they synonymous? These are words used by the *muḥaddithūn* and *uṣūliyyūn* alike as you have already studied in *Nūr al-Anwār* and *Sharḥ an-Nukhbah*.

Majority of the *muḥaddithūn* opine that *ḥadīth* and *khavar* are synonymous. However, they differed in regards to the definition of *ḥadīth*. Some defined it as the sayings and conditions of the Prophet ﷺ, while others included the statements of the companions in this definition, and some also included the statements of the *tābi'ūn*. Some *muḥaddithūn* are of the opinion that there is a difference between *ḥadīth* and *khavar*.

"الحديث ما جاء عن النبي ﷺ والخبر ما جاء عن غيره."

Some *muḥaddithūn* state that *ḥadīth* is specific whereas *khavar* is general.

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scholars have specified *athar* with *mawqūf* narrations and they do not use this term to refer to *marfū* narrations.

The Compilation of Ḥadīth

Three points will be addressed in this chapter:

1. The purpose of compilation.
2. Who prompted the compilation of ḥadīth?
3. Who was the foremost compiler of ḥadīth?

There was no arrangement for the compilation of ḥadīth during the time of the companions and senior *tābi'ūn*. The prophetic knowledge was preserved in their hearts. Owing to the impeccable memories of the Arabs at the time, there was no system of documentation and compilation. However, the companions began to pass away and it was imminent that the world would soon be bereft of their blessed souls.

Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz took the reins of the *khilāfah* in 99 AH, and it had been approximately a century since the demise of the Prophet ﷺ. Fearing that the companions would all pass away and take the prophetic knowledge with them to their graves, he sent an order to the scholars and the *muḥaddithūn* in his territories to gather the ḥadīth of the Prophet ﷺ. Thus, Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣfahānī writes in his book *Tārīkh Iṣfahān*:

"كتب عمر بن عبد العزيز إلى الآفاق: انظروا حديث رسول الله ﷺ فاجمعوه."

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz wrote throughout the lands, "Examine the ḥadīth of the Prophet ﷺ and gather it." In some accounts, it has been mentioned that he wrote specifically to Qādī Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm who was the Qādī and governor of Madinah. This has been narrated by Imām Muḥammad with his chain of narration in his recension of Imām Mālik's *Muwatṭa'*, and by Imām Bukhārī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* under the chapter heading *باب كيف يقبض العلم*:

"كتب عمر بن عبد العزيز إلى أبي بكر بن حزم: انظر ما كان من حديث رسول الله ﷺ فاكتبه لي فإني خفت دروس العلم وذهاب العلماء."

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz wrote to Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm, "Look for the ḥadīth of the Prophet ﷺ and get it written for me, as I am afraid that religious knowledge will vanish and the 'ulamā' will pass away." Thus, on the orders of 'Umar ibn

'Abd al-'Azīz, the *muḥaddithūn* began gathering the ḥadīth. From those who initially began compiling the ḥadīth, two names are particularly notable. The first is Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī whose full name is Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn 'Ubaydillāh ibn 'Abdillāh ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī. The second is Abū Bakr ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Amr ibn Ḥazm. Owing to the fact that they were both contemporaries, it is rather difficult to ascertain who from the two was the actual foremost compiler of ḥadīth. Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī passed away in 125 AH and Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm passed away in 120 AH. Majority of the scholars lean towards Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī being the first compiler, and this is the opinion of Imām Mālik, Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar, Imām Suyūṭī et al. It seems as if Imām Bukhārī opines that Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm was the foremost compiler, as can be understood from the narration mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr narrates from Imām Mālik in *At-Tamhīd* that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz passed away before Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm's compilation could reach him. This substantiates the opinion of the majority of scholars. Furthermore, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr writes in *Jāmi' Bayān al-'Ilm wa Faḍliḥī* that Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī said, "Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz ordered us to gather the ḥadīth, so we wrote volumes upon volumes and sent them before the *Khalīfah*. He then sent them to his subordinate territories." We learn from this that Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī compiled ḥadīth before Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm.

In this regard, a third name is also sometimes mentioned and that is of Sha'bī whose name is 'Āmir ibn Sharāḥīl. Hence, Imām Suyūṭī quotes from Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar in *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī*:

"أما جمع حديث إلى مثله فقد سبق إليه الشعبي."

As for the compilation of ḥadīth on a single topic, then Sha'bī was the first to do this. He gathered *aḥādīth* on the topic of *ṭalāq* and wrote:

"هذا باب من الطلاق جسيم."

¹ Shaykh Yūnus mentions that some people claim that Imām Bukhārī was of the opinion that Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm was the foremost compiler of ḥadīth. However, he says that in his opinion this is incorrect. Imām Bukhārī may have mentioned this narration, but he mentions it in *باب كتابة العلم* and not in *باب كيف يقبض العلم*. Furthermore, it cannot be ascertained from the narration that Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm was the foremost compiler, but rather, only that he was a compiler. Neither can it be established from this narration that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz only wrote to Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm. (*Al-Fayḍ al-Jārī fī Durūs al-Bukhārī*)

This is a large chapter containing *aḥādīth* pertaining to *ṭalāq*. It can thus be said that Sha'bī was actually the foremost compiler of *ḥadīth* owing to the fact that he was much senior to Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī and Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm. Sha'bī was born in 17 AH while Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī was born in 50 AH. However, he was not famously known amongst the compilers of *ḥadīth* as he only compiled *aḥādīth* on a particular topic, i.e., *aḥādīth* pertaining to *ṭalāq*.

In summary, Sha'bī was the foremost compiler of *ḥadīth* on a particular topic, and there are two opinions regarding the foremost compiler in general; majority opine Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī while some say Abū Bakr ibn Ḥazm, and it seems as if this was Imām Bukhārī's inclination.

N.B. It can be understood from the discussion above that the compilation of *ḥadīth* took place under the instruction of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz which was indeed a revolutionary achievement. It has been mentioned in the *ḥadīth* that Allah will make an individual or a group in this *ummah* at the turn of every century that will do such work whereby they will revive the religion. Thus, scholars have considered 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz to be the reviver of the first century. Imām Suyūṭī has mentioned a consensus of scholars in this regard. These collections of *aḥādīth* that are before us today are due to the foresight and endeavors of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz.¹

Scholars throughout the ages have speculated and endeavoured to determine the reviver of each century based on their research and findings, and books have been written on this topic. It is the opinion of many people of knowledge and vision that the movement of *Dā'wah* and *Tablīgh* of Mawlānā Muḥammad Ilyās ؒ is from the revivalist movements of the 14th century.

Ranks of Compilers

There were many phases of compilation. The first phase was that which was mentioned above and is known as general compilation, wherein *aḥādīth* were

¹ Many biographies of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz have been written. Of these, one biography was written by a student of Imām Mālik, Abū Muḥammad 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam al-Mālikī al-Miṣrī (d. 214 AH). In his book, he has beautifully gathered many anecdotes pertaining to the abstinence, contentment, piety, and purity, of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and the justice and equity during his reign. MA

gathered in book form in no particular manner. The second phase is known as thematic compilation, wherein the previously compiled *aḥādīth* were grouped and gathered according to their relevance and subject. Thereafter, a third phase came which was the phase of soundness-based compilation wherein the *muḥaddithūn* painstakingly separated the sound narrations from the weak narrations which had been documented in the previous compilations, and then compiled works containing only the sound narrations. The first phase took place at the end of the first century, the second in the middle of the second century, and the third in the beginning of the third century.

Those *muḥaddithūn* who compiled works during the first phase have already been mentioned. Some of the *muḥaddithūn* that compiled *aḥādīth* during the second phase are 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Jurayj, Hushaym ibn Bashīr al-Wāsiṭī, Ma'mar ibn Rāshid al-Yamanī, Imām Mālik, and 'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak. The foremost name from the compilers of the third phase is that of none other than Imām Bukhārī, and thereafter Imām Muslim. Imām Suyūṭī sums up these three phases with the following couplets in his *Alfiyyah*¹:

أول جامع الحديث والأثر	ابن شهاب أمر له عمر
وأول الجامع للأبواب	جماعة في العصر ذو اقتراب
كلن جريج وهشيم مالك	ومعمر وولد المبارك
وأول الجامع باقتصار	على الصحيح فقط البخاري

Shaykh Zakariyyā ؒ has mentioned in the introduction to *Awjaz al-Masālik* that Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar has added another phase before the last of the previously mentioned three phases. This phase is called the *Masānīd* compilation phase. A *Musnad* is a type of *ḥadīth* compilation that gathers *aḥādīth* according to the names of the companions, contrary to thematic compilation. Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar mentions two names in this category;

¹ An *Alfiyyah* is a poem consisting of a thousand or approximately one thousand couplets. There are two that are famous in *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth*; the *Alfiyyahs* of Suyūṭī and 'Irāqī. MA

'Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsā al-'Absī and Nu'aym ibn Hammād al-Khuzā'i. Thereafter, the *Masānīd* compilation became increasingly common and many *Masānīd* were authored. *Musnad Abī Dāwūd at-Tayālīsī*, *Musnad al-Humaydī*, *Musnad Abī Ya'lā*, and *Musnad Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* are very famous and well-known. I feel that *Musnad Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* was the most voluminous of all compilations at the time. It is a compilation of approximately thirty-thousand *aḥādīth*, and the amazing element is that despite its vastness, its narrations are strong. Therefore, Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz ad-Dihlawī has counted it amongst the second type of compilation, along with *Sunan Thalāthah* [Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Nasa'ī].

The Documentation of Ḥadīth

Shaykh Zakariyyā ʿ used to mention in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* lectures that the rejectors of *ḥadīth* object that the compilation of *ḥadīth* began approximately a century after the Prophet ʿ's demise. How can such a compilation that was compiled a century after the speaker's demise be authentic and acceptable? There is a strong possibility of error in such a prolonged period of time. From the compilations in existence today, the *Muwatta'* of Imām Mālik is the oldest and according to Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, it came into existence approximately a hundred and ten or a hundred and twenty years after the demise of the Prophet ʿ, as it was prepared in either 120 AH or 130 AH. Our scholars have replied to these types of objections from the rejectors of *ḥadīth* and books have been authored on this specific topic.¹

In actual fact, the rejectors of *ḥadīth* have been unable to differentiate between the documentation of *ḥadīth* and the compilation of *ḥadīth*. However, there is a very apparent difference between the two. Documentation and compilation are two disparate concepts. Compilation refers to the gathering of *ḥadīth* in book form, which was initiated during the time of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz approximately a century after the Prophet ʿ's demise. However, the documentation of *ḥadīth* had begun

¹ Mawlānā Ḥabīb ar-Raḥmān al-'A'zamī's book *Nuṣratul Ḥadīth* in the Urdu language is exemplary on this topic. Similarly, Dr Muṣṭafā as-Sibā'ī's *As-Sunnah wa Makānatuhā fī 't-Tashrī al-Islāmī* is also very insightful. MA

during the lifetime of the Prophet ʿ. Many sound *aḥādīth* substantiate this, and majority of the authors of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* have allocated chapters in their respective books to prove the documentation of knowledge.

Imām Bukhārī has narrated three *aḥādīth* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* under the chapter of *باب كاتبة العلم*:

1. The first narration is that of Abū Juḥayfah,¹ who was the student of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ʿ. He says, "I asked 'Alī, 'Have you got any book (which contains *aḥādīth* or some specific rulings pertaining to the family of the Prophet ʿ)?" 'Alī replied, 'No, except the Book of Allah or the power of understanding which has been bestowed upon a Muslim or what is in this sheet of paper.'" Abū Juḥayfah said, "I asked, 'What is in this sheet of paper?' 'Alī replied, 'It deals with the *diyyah* (blood money paid by the killer to the relatives of the victim), the ransom for the releasing of the captives from the hands of the enemies, and the law that no Muslim should be killed (in *Qīṣās*) for the killing of a disbeliever."²

The narration of *Sunan an-Nasa'ī* mentions that 'Alī took out the parchment from the sheath of his sword. The reason behind the question of Abū Juḥayfah was that it had been circulated regarding 'Alī that he was granted exclusive knowledge by the Prophet ʿ, and he had also received special advice, as the *Rawāfiḍ* claim. In his answer, 'Alī refuted any such claim.

2. The second narration in the chapter is that of Abū Hurayrah ʿ. In the year of the Conquest of Makkah, the tribe of Khuzā'ah killed a man from the tribe of Banū Layth in revenge for a killed person of their tribe. The Prophet ʿ delivered a sermon in which he expounded on the sanctity of the *Ḥaram*. A man from Yemen came and requested that the Prophet ʿ have the sermon transcribed for him. The Prophet ʿ ordered his

¹ Wahb ibn 'Abdillāh, a famous companion. His narrations can be found in the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*.

² حدثنا محمد بن سلام، قال: أخبرنا وكيع، عن سفيان، عن مطرف، عن الشعبي، عن أبي جحيفة، قال: قلت لعلي بن أبي طالب: هل عنكم كتاب؟ قال: "لا، إلا كتاب الله، أو فهم أعطيه رجل مسلم، أو ما في هذه الصحيفة. قال: قلت: فما في هذه الصحيفة؟ قال: العقل، وفكك الأسير، ولا يقتل مسلم بكافر."

companions, "Write it for Abū Shāh."¹

3. The third narration is also from Abū Hurayrah. He says, "There is none among the companions of the Prophet ﷺ who has narrated more *aḥādīth* than I except 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr, for he used to write and I would not."²

This portion is mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* whilst the narration is mentioned at length in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr says, "I used to write everything I heard from the Prophet ﷺ. I intended to memorise it. The Quraysh prohibited me saying, 'Do you write everything you hear from him while the Prophet ﷺ is a human being? He speaks in anger and pleasure.' So, I stopped writing, and made mention of this to the Prophet ﷺ. He pointed to his mouth and said, 'Write, by Him in whose hand my soul lies, only the truth comes out from it.'"³

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr named this collection *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah aṣ-Ṣādiqah*. He used to say that he only finds pleasure in this world in two things; the *Ṣaḥīfah*, and some land that belonged to him called *al-Waḥṭ*. This has also been mentioned in *Sunan an-Nasa'ī*. After his demise, this collection went into the possession of his grandson Shu'ayb ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abdillāh. Shu'ayb's son 'Amr narrates from Shu'ayb, and all the narrations found in the books of *ḥadīth* with this chain of narration ['Amr ibn Shu'ayb > his father > his grandfather] have been taken from this *Ṣaḥīfah*.

Imām Bukhārī raises two objections on this narration. Firstly, this narration necessitates that the narrations of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr be more than the narrations of Abū Hurayrah. However, the number of Abū

1 حدثنا أبو نعيم الفضل بن دكين، قال: حدثنا شيبان، عن يحيى، عن أبي سلمة، عن أبي هريرة: أن خزاعة قتلوا رجلاً من بني ليث - عام فتح مكة - فبئس منهم قتلوه، فأخبر بذلك النبي ﷺ، فركب راحلته فخطب، فقال: «إن الله حبس عن مكة القتلى، أو القيل» - قال أبو عبد الله كذا، قال أبو نعيم واجعلوه على الشك القيل أو القتل وغيره يقول القيل - وسلط عليهم رسول الله ﷺ والمؤمنين، ألا وإنها لم تحل لأحد قبلي، ولم تحل لأحد بعدي، ألا وإنها حلت لي ساعة من نهار، ألا وإنها ساعتي هذه حرام، لا يختل شوكها، ولا يعضد شجرها، ولا تلتقط ساقطها إلا لمنشد، فمن قتل فهو بخير النظرين: إما أن يعقل، وإما أن يقاد أهل القتل. جاء رجل من أهل اليمن فقال: اكتب لي يا رسول الله، فقال: «اكتبوا لأبي فلان».

2 حدثنا علي بن عبد الله، قال: حدثنا سفيان، قال: حدثنا عمرو، قال: أخبرني وهب بن منبه، عن أخيه، قال: سمعت أبا هريرة، يقول: «ما من أحب النبي ﷺ أحد أكثر حديثاً عنه مني، إلا ما كان من عبد الله بن عمرو، فإنه كان يكتب ولا أكتب» تابعه معمر، عن همام، عن أبي هريرة.

3 حدثنا مسدد، وأبو بكر بن أبي شيبة، قالوا: حدثنا يحيى، عن عبيد الله بن الأحنس، عن الوليد بن عبد الله بن أبي معيث، عن يوسف بن ماهك، عن عبد الله بن عمرو، قال: كنت أكتب كل شيء أسمعه من رسول الله ﷺ أريد حفظه، فنهتني قریش وقالوا: أكتب كل شيء تسمعه ورسول الله ﷺ يشر يتكلم في الغضب، والرضا، فأمسكت عن الكتاب، فذكرت ذلك لرسول الله ﷺ، فأومأ بأصبعه إلى فيه، فقال: «اكتب فوالذي نفسي بيده ما يخرج منه إلا حق».

Hurayrah's narrations are 5374. The number of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr's narrations are close to seven hundred.

Hāfiẓ ibn Hajar provided multiple answers to this objection in *Fath al-Bārī*.

This is an example of *istithnā' munqaṭi'* and in this instance, the objection no longer remains. In summary, Abū Hurayrah is saying that no companion had more narrations than him. However, 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr would write whereas he would not, and there was a possibility that the narrations of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr would surpass the narrations of Abū Hurayrah. In regards to the rest of the companions, he is saying with conviction that none have more narrations than him.

However, if the *istithnā'* is taken to be *muttaṣil*, the statement of Abū Hurayrah necessitates that the narrations of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr actually be more than his. The narrations of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr in the books of *ḥadīth* are however far less than the narrations of Abū Hurayrah. What was the cause of this? Where did the narrations of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr end up? Scholars have mentioned multiple reasons for the minimal number of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr's narrations found in the books of *ḥadīth*.

- 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr's pre-occupation with worship was more than that of teaching *ḥadīth*. Thus, his narrations are less.
- After the Muslim conquests, 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr mainly resided in Egypt or Ṭā'if. The students of knowledge travelled more to Madinah than they did to Egypt or Ṭā'if, and Abū Hurayrah resided in Madinah and remained there until his demise, where he was pre-occupied in teaching and narrating *aḥādīth*. Therefore, the number of students who narrated from Abū Hurayrah far exceeds those that narrated from 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr, and his narrations spread far and wide throughout the Muslim lands. Imām Bukhārī mentions that approximately eight hundred *tābi'ūn* narrated from Abū Hurayrah, more than any other companion.
- The Prophet ﷺ made a *du'ā'* for Abū Hurayrah that he would not forget any *ḥadīth* and thus, his narrations exceeded those of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr.
- After the conquest of Shām, many books and scriptures from the people of the book (*ahl'l-kitāb*) came into the possession of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr. He would read these scriptures and relate their contents. Due to this,

many *tābi'ūn* refrained from taking *aḥādīth* from him. These answers have all been recorded by Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar in *Fath al-Bārī*. Shaykh Yūnus Jaunpūrī mentioned to me that the scriptures mentioned by Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar have also been mentioned by Ḥāfiẓ ibn Kathīr in his *Tafsīr*. In particular, the *aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah al-Yarmūkiyyah* which 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr acquired from Yarmouk, has been mentioned in numerous places. Furthermore, we find in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* under the chapter *باب أمارات الساعة*.

"وكان عبد الله يقرأ الكتب"

The second objection is that we see in the narration of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* that Abū Hurayrah would not write *aḥādīth*. However, we learn from various narrations of *Mustadrak Ḥākim* and other books that he would document *aḥādīth*. Ḥasan ibn 'Amr says that a *ḥadīth* was recited to Abū Hurayrah while he was present. Abū Hurayrah took hold of his hand and took him to his house, and showed him many collections and books of *aḥādīth*. He then said, "Look, I have this *ḥadīth* written by me."

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr answered that the *ḥadīth* of Hammām narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* is more authentic, and the second narration is weak. He further says that it is also possible to consolidate between the two narrations. Abū Hurayrah would not write during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, but he began writing his *aḥādīth* after the Prophet ﷺ's demise. Commenting on this, Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar says that a more compelling answer would be that it is not necessary that these books and collections be written by Abū Hurayrah. When it has been established from the narration of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* that he would not write *aḥādīth*, we can surmise that the written collections that he had were written by another person.¹

In a similar manner, we find written collections of many other companions. The written collection of Samurah addressed to his sons is well-known. A hundred narrations of this collection can be found in *Musnad al-Bazzār*, and Imām Abū Dāwūd has mentioned six of these narrations on various topics in various chapters in his *Sunan*. All of these narrations are

¹ See also: *An Introduction to the conservation of Ḥadīth in the light of the Ṣaḥīfah of Hammām ibn Munabbih* by Dr Muhammad Hamidullah.

transmitted with the same *sanad* and they all begin with the words '*ammā ba'd*.' Similarly, the *Ṣaḥīfah* of Hammām ibn Munabbih from Abū Hurayrah that was recently published in Hyderabad is also well-known. The invitations and letters of the Prophet ﷺ, some laws regarding charity which the Prophet ﷺ had penned and sent to his governors, and *Kitāb aṣ-Ṣadaqāt* that the Prophet ﷺ had ordered to be written and given to 'Amr ibn Ḥazm when he was made the governor of Najrān are all well-known and famous.

However, there was no formal documentation of *ḥadīth* en masse during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. There were multiple reasons for this:

- Firstly, documentation was not the purpose. The purpose was preservation, and documentation is a means of preservation. If a person has an impeccable memory, there would be no need for documentation. The Arabs had exceptional memories, whereby they would easily memorise lengthy sonnets and ballads.
- Very few companions were literate.
- Some narrations mention a prohibition of writing *aḥādīth*. A narration from Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī can be found in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* where the Prophet ﷺ says:

"لا تكتبوا عني غير القرآن ومن كتب عني غير القرآن فليمحاه."

Based on this narration, a difference of opinion arose among the companions regarding the permissibility of writing *aḥādīth*. Some considered it permissible whereas others considered it impermissible.

Due to the aforementioned reasons, the companions would not generally write *aḥādīth*. However, it can be observed that the narrations regarding the permissibility are contradictory. Some narrations indicate towards permissibility and command it, while others prohibit it. There are many

¹ The reason why each *ḥadīth* begins with '*ammā ba'd*' is that the written collection of Samurah was a small treatise and all the narrations within shared the same chain of narration. Thus, Samurah wrote the *sanad* in the beginning of the treatise, and then listed the texts of the *aḥādīth* continuously. As he had written it addressed to his sons, after the opening *khuṭbah*, he wrote the words '*ammā ba'd*', and every author that took select narrations from this booklet thereafter, attaches the *sanad* that is mentioned at the beginning of the booklet and the words '*ammā ba'd*'. MA

answers to this:

- Many *muḥaddithūn* have objected to the narration of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Imām Bukhārī opines that the narration of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* has not been established as *marfu'*, but rather it is *mawqūf*.
- The prohibition was temporary, so that the *ḥadīth* would not be mixed with the *Qur'ān*.
- The prohibition was of writing the *ḥadīth* with the *Qur'ān*. If it had been written in this manner, it should be erased.
- The order of prohibition was prior to that of permissibility. The narrations of permissibility abrogated the prohibition.

Nevertheless, there was a difference of opinion amongst the earlier generations regarding the permissibility of documenting *aḥādīth*. However, Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar mentions that during the reign of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, all the scholars were unanimous upon the permissibility and desirability of documenting *aḥādīth*. He further explains that it can also be said that if propagation of knowledge is incumbent upon a person, yet he fears he may forget, it would become incumbent upon him to document that knowledge.

Nisbah

The categories of the various sciences are stipulated. There are two types of sciences; the rational and the transmitted. There are then two types of transmitted sciences; *shar'ī* and *non-shar'ī*. The *shar'ī* is then of two types; fundamental and subsidiary. We now need to ascertain which category *'ilm l-ḥadīth* falls under. *'ilm l-ḥadīth* concerns the sayings, actions, etc. of the Prophet ﷺ which are all transmitted. The foundation of our religion is built upon the *Qur'ān* and *ḥadīth*, which form the fundamentals of religion. Thus, *'ilm l-ḥadīth* is from the fundamental, *shar'ī*, transmitted branch of knowledge. *'ilm l-fiqh* is of the transmitted, *shar'ī* type, but from the subsidiary rather than fundamental. *Naḥw*, *Ṣarf*, *Ma'ānī*, etc. are also transmitted, but are of the *non-shar'ī* type.

Martabah

Shaykh Zakariyyā used to say that a ranking can be from two aspects; from the aspect of teaching and learning, or from the aspect of virtue. From the aspect of teaching and learning, *'ilm l-ḥadīth* holds a secondary rank and should be studied after the introductory Arabic sciences. Without these sciences, it would be difficult for us non-Arabs to understand the *ḥadīth*. Effectively, the sciences are of two types; *'ulūm 'āliyah* (tools and non-intended) or *'ulūm 'ālīyah* (lofty and intended). *Naḥw*, *ṣarf*, *ma'ānī*, *bayān*, etc. are all *'ulūm 'āliyah* and are tools to understand the *Qur'ān* and *ḥadīth*. *Tafsīr*, *ḥadīth* and *fiqh* are *'ulūm 'ālīyah*. The order of study is that *'ulūm 'āliyah* should initially be sought, and then *'ulūm 'ālīyah*, as the syllabuses in our institutes are structured. Firstly, *naḥw* and *ṣarf* are taught, and thereafter *ḥadīth* and *tafsīr*. By order of virtue, *'ilm l-ḥadīth* is the most virtuous of the religious sciences. Sufyān ath-Thawrī says:

"لا أعلم علماً أفضل من علم الحديث."

The religious sciences are five; *ḥadīth*, *fiqh*, *tafsīr*, *uṣūl al-fiqh* and *'ilm al-'aqa'id*. Some scholars have counted *'ilm at-taṣawwuf* separately, making the number of religious sciences six. The author of *an-Nibrās*, the famous commentary of *Sharḥ al-'aqa'id* has also listed the religious sciences in this way.

While enumerating the virtues of *'ilm l-ḥadīth* in *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī*, Imām Suyūṭī mentions that all the religious sciences are dependent on *'ilm l-ḥadīth*. *Fiqh* is dependent on *'ilm l-ḥadīth* as majority of the rulings of *fiqh* are derived from the *ḥadīth*. *Tafsīr* is dependent on *'ilm l-ḥadīth* as the *mufasssīrūn* have said that the best *tafsīr* is that which has come from the Prophet ﷺ.

However, in *Al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm l-Qur'ān*, Imām Suyūṭī expresses that *tafsīr* is the most virtuous of all sciences. This opinion seems to be more accurate, as the virtue of any science is dictated by the subject matter of that science and its virtue. The subject matter of *'ilm l-ḥadīth* is the being of the Prophet ﷺ, whereas the subject matter of *tafsīr* is the speech of Allah, which is from the eternal attributes of Allah, making it more virtuous than the subject matter of *'ilm l-ḥadīth*.

I once read in one of the works of Mawlānā 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Lakhnawī that a group of people once came to him in the month of *Ramaḍān*, disputing

whether the being of the Prophet ﷺ was more virtuous or the Qur'ān. Mawlānā writes that he replied the Qur'ān was more virtuous, and he mentions the same analogy that has previously been mentioned that *qadīm* is more virtuous than *ḥadīth*.

A *ḥadīth* on this topic has been mentioned in *al-Maqāṣid al-Ḥasanah*:

"آية من كتاب الله خير من محمد وآله."

Imām Sakhāwī states that he was unable to locate this narration. He goes on to list many narrations regarding the virtues of the Qur'ān which indicate that a single verse of the Qur'ān is more virtuous than the heavens, earth and all within them. However, the matter is not resolved by means of such narrations.

In my humble opinion, the answer to the issue is that the Qur'ān is undoubtedly more virtuous than the being of the Prophet ﷺ. However, the subject matter of *'ilm 'l-ḥadīth* is the being of the Prophet ﷺ with respect to his prophethood, and the subject matter of *tafsīr* is the Qur'ān, with respect to explanation of its meaning and clarification of its interpretation, which is a quality of the creation, and not with respect to being an attribute of Allah. The Qur'ān is not dealt with in the science of *tafsīr* with respect to its being the speech and an attribute of Allah, but rather the explanation of its meanings is discussed. Thus, it can be said that the subject matter of *'ilm 'l-ḥadīth* is more virtuous than the subject matter of *tafsīr*.

Classification

In the same way a book is divided into sections and chapters, sciences and subjects can also be divided and distributed into sections. For example, the logicians mention regarding logic that its discussions are divided into two sections; conceptualisations (*taṣawwurāt*) and assents (*taṣdīqāt*). The author of *Talkhīṣ al-Miftāḥ* writes regarding *'ilm 'l-ma'ānī*:

"الفن الأول في علم المعاني وهو ينحصر في ثمانية أبواب."

It should be noted that *'ilm 'l-ḥadīth* can also be divided into eight categories, i.e., eight topics are discussed in the books of *ḥadīth*. All *aḥādīth* will fall into one of the eight categories. The eight categories are:

1. 'Aqā'id - Beliefs
2. Aḥkām - Rulings
3. Tafsīr - Exegesis
4. Tārīkh - History
5. Riqāq - Heart-softeners
6. Manāqib - Virtues
7. Ādāb - Etiquettes
8. Fitan - Trials

The *muḥaddithīn* have authored specific books on each of these topics, and the book of *ḥadīth* that contains each of these eight categories will be classed as a 'Jāmi'.

¹ The *aḥādīth* of 'Aqā'id are termed *'ilm 't-Tawḥīd* and Imām Bayhaqī's *Kitāb al-Asmā' wa 'ṣ-Ṣifāt* is well-known in this field. The *aḥādīth* of Aḥkām concern the chapters in the books of *fiqh* from *Kitāb at-Tahārah* to *Kitāb al-Farā'id*. These books of *ḥadīth* are many and are known as *Sunan*. The *aḥādīth* of *tafsīr* are termed *'ilm 't-Tafsīr* and many books of *ḥadīth* have been compiled like *Tafsīr Ibn Mardūyah*, *Tafsīr Ibn Jarīr*, *Tafsīr Ibn Mājah*, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*. Imām Suyūṭī's *Ad-Durr al-Manthūr fī 't-Tafsīr bi 'l-Ma'thūr* is an extremely comprehensive and well-known book of *ḥadīth* in *tafsīr*. The *aḥādīth* of *Tārīkh* are of two types; those that mention the heavens, earth, angels, prophets, previous nations, jinn, *shayāṭīn*, and other creations. This portion is termed *bad' al-khalq* in the terminology of the *muḥaddithūn*. There is a chapter titled *bad' al-khalq* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. The second portion is that which mentions the life of the Prophet ﷺ from birth to demise, and the lives of his family and companions. This portion is termed *'ilm 's-Siyar*. Many books have been written on this topic, like Ibn Qayyīm's *Zād al-Ma'ād fī Hady Khayr al-'Ibād*, *Sīrah Ibn Ishāq*, *Sīrah Ibn Hishām*, *Al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah bi 'l-Minah al-Muhammadiyyah* of Qaṣṭallānī, Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaqq ad-Dihlawī's *Madārij an-Nubuwwah*, the author of *Al-Qāmūs Majd ad-Dīn al-Firūzābādī's Sifr as-Sa'ādah* which Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaqq ad-Dihlawī has a commentary on. The *aḥādīth* of *Riqāq* are termed *'ilm 's-Sulūk wa 'z-Zuhd*. The *Kitāb az-Zuhd* of Imām Aḥmad and 'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak are famous on this topic. There is a long chapter dedicated to the *aḥādīth* of *zuhd* in *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī*. The *aḥādīth* of *Manāqib* are known as *'ilm 'l-Manāqib*. There are many books on this topic too, like *Manāqib Quraysh*, *Manāqib al-Anṣār*, *Manāqib al-'Asharah al-Mubash'sharah*, Muḥib at-Ṭabarī's *Ar-Riyāḍ an-Naḍarah fī Manāqib al-'Asharah al-Mubash'sharah*, *Al-Qawl aṣ-Ṣawāb fī Manāqib 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, *Al-Qawl al-Jalī fī Manāqib Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī*. Imām Nasa'ī has a book on the virtues of 'Alī, for which he was criticised, and the incident is well documented. The *aḥādīth* of *Ādāb* are termed *'ilm 'l-Adab*. Imām Bukhārī's *Al-Adab al-Mufrad* is a famous work in this field and is included in the syllabus in many institutes. The *aḥādīth* of *Fitan* are termed *'ilm 'l-fitan* and many books have been written on this topic. A very lengthy work on this topic

Legal status

In a region where there is only a single person who has the ability and capacity to acquire 'ilm 'l-ḥadīth, it will be *wājib alā 'l-'ayn* upon that person to acquire it. Where there are multiple individuals capable of acquiring it, the ruling will change and it would now become *wājib alā 'l-kifāyah*.

is that of Nu'aym ibn Ḥammād. The books detailing the signs of *Qiyāmah* will also be classed in this category. For example, *Al-Ishā'ah li Ashrāt as-Sā'ah* of as-Sayyid Muḥammad al-Barzanjī, *Al-Idhā'ah* of Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khan, and Shāh Rafī' ad-Dīn's *Alāmāte Qiyāmat* in the Urdu language. (Abridged from the introduction of *Lāmi' ad-Darārī*) MA

MUQADDIMAT 'L-KITĀB

Muqaddimat 'l-kitāb can be divided into two discussions; that which is regarding the author (*muṣannif*), and that which is regarding the book (*muṣannaḥ*). The first introduces and discusses the life of the author, and the second introduces and discusses the book.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Name, Lineage & Origin

The authors name is Sulaymān, his patronymic is Abū Dāwūd, and his father's name is Ash'ath. His full name is as follows: Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath ibn Ishāq ibn Bashīr ibn Shaddād ibn 'Amr al-Azdī as-Sijistānī. He has also been referred to as as-Sijzī. Azd is a famous tribe of Yemen. As-Sijistānī is an attribution to Sijistān,¹ which in turn is the Arabicisation of Sīstān.

¹ Sijistān is situated in south-west Afghanistan and extends into eastern Iran, consisting of the Afghan provinces of Kandahar, Helmand and Nimroz. The district capital of ancient Sijistān was Zaranj, which is now the provincial capital of the Nimroz province. The city of Zaranj was also known as Sijistān and Arab geographers only knew it by this name. Some have said that Sijistān and Zaranj are synonymous. However, this is not the case. As Zaranj was the district capital, it too came to be known by this name. The Muslims conquered Sijistān in 23 AH during the reign of 'Umar ؓ. The borders of Sijistān continuously shifted throughout the ages, and at some point, it included the entire south and central Afghanistan, including Ghazni and all south of it, and Kandahar and all west of it. (*Al-Madkhal ilā Sunan Abī Dāwūd* - Dr Muḥammad Muḥammadi ibn Muḥammad Jamīl an-Nūrīstānī) The map below indicates the location of Zaranj.



Political Map of the World. *The World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency. June 2019.

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Sīstān is a famous region on the borders of Khurasan, situated between Khurasan and Kirmān. He is thus also sometimes referred to as al-Khurāsānī. There are two opinions with regards to the reference as-Sijzī. Some say that Sijz is actually another name for Sijistān. Others opine that it is a mutilation which occurs in ascription, like a person of Rayy is referred to as ar-Rāzī.

Ibn Khallikān mentions regarding the ascription as-Sijistānī that it is an ascription to either Sijistān or Sijistānah, which is a suburb of Basra. Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz has refuted this claim and expressed surprise at how Ibn Khallikān could have erred despite his vast knowledge of history. He affirms that as-Sijistānī is an ascription to the famous region. Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khan says there was no need to refute Ibn Khallikān, as he was merely quoting an opinion.

Date of Birth

Imām Abū Dāwūd was born in the early third century in 202 AH in Sijistān. He travelled to Egypt, Shām, Ḥijāz, Iraq and Khurasan in the pursuit of knowledge. He travelled to Baghdad many times, and eventually settled there, and narrated his *Sunan* there too.¹

¹ The map below briefly outlines the travels of Imām Abū Dāwūd, from his initial travels to Egypt, and then back to his hometown, and thereafter to Baghdad and Basra, where he finally settled and passed away.



Political Map of the World. *The World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency. June 2019.

Residence in Baghdad & Transfer to Basra

During the latter portion of his life, Imām Abū Dāwūd shifted to Basra in 271 AH, four years prior to his demise, at the request of the Emir of Basra. Imām Abū Dāwūd's student, Abū Bakr ibn Jābir relates that on one occasion Imām Abū Dāwūd returned to his residence in Baghdad after the *Maghrib Ṣalāh*. The Emir of Basra, Abū Aḥmad al-Muwaffaq came to the door and knocked on it. Abū Bakr ibn Jābir went and informed Imām Abū Dāwūd of his coming, and the Imām gave permission for him to enter. Imām Abū Dāwūd enquired regarding the reason of his visit. The Emir explained that he had three requests. The first request was for Imām Abū Dāwūd to shift to Basra, so that the city would be adorned with his knowledge by the influx of students that would come to study with him. The second was that he wished for Imām Abū Dāwūd to teach his children the *Sunan*. The third request was that Imām Abū Dāwūd should hold a special lesson for the children of the Emir, as the children of Emirs do not sit alongside common people. Imām Abū Dāwūd obliged to the first two requests and said:

"الناس شريفهم ووضعهم في العلم سواء."

The nobles and commoners are all equal in the acquisition of knowledge. Abū Bakr ibn Jābir relates that it would so happen that the Emir's children would attend the general gatherings of Imām Abū Dāwūd. They were however afforded a veiled quarter in which they would sit. Nevertheless, a separate gathering was not organised for them.

Imām Abū Dāwūd spent the last four years of his life in Basra and he passed away on Friday the 16th of *Shawwāl* 275 AH. He requested that Ḥasan ibn al-Muthannā should bathe him if possible, otherwise he should be bathed in accordance with Sulaymān ibn Ḥarb's *Kitāb al-Ghusl*. 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Wāḥid led the *Ṣalāt al-Janāzah*, and Imām Abū Dāwūd was laid to rest in close proximity to Sufyān ath-Thawrī.

His Teachers

Imām Abū Dāwūd studied with the teachers of Imām Bukhārī and Imām Muslim. Ḥafīẓ ibn Ḥajar enumerates the teachers of Imām Abū Dāwūd close

to three-hundred.¹ Imām Abū Dāwūd was not the student of any of the authors of the remaining *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*. Imām Abū Dāwūd was a very prominent student of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Imām Abū Dāwūd would take pride in the fact that Imām Aḥmad heard one *ḥadīth* from him. It was the *ḥadīth* known as *ḥadīth al-'Atīrah*.

"أن رسول الله ﷺ سئل عن العتيرة فحسنها."

The author of *Al-Manhal al-'Adhb al-Mawrūd* incorrectly states this as the famous *ḥadīth* that has been narrated in majority of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*, and is also narrated in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*.

"لا فرع ولا عتيرة."

However, this is incorrect as this *ḥadīth* is not *gharīb*, whilst Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal classed the *ḥadīth* he heard from Imām Abū Dāwūd as *gharīb*.

Ḥāfiẓ ibn Kathīr writes in *al-Bidāyah wa 'n-Nihāyah* that Imām Abū Dāwūd says, he was once in the company of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. Ibn abī Samīnah happened to come by, so Imām Aḥmad told him that Imām Abū Dāwūd has a *ḥadīth* which is *gharīb* and ordered him to write it down. He then requested Imām Abū Dāwūd to dictate the *ḥadīth* to him. There is a clear indication in this account that the *ḥadīth* is *gharīb*.

Despite having memorised and gathered countless *aḥādīth*, Imām Aḥmad comes to know of a *ḥadīth* that is with his student, so he promptly takes it from the student and notes it down, and furthermore, encourages others to do the same.

Another incident of Imām Aḥmad comes to mind that has been related by Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī in *Mirqāt al-Mafātīh*. A student of Imām Aḥmad once asked him, "When will this teaching and learning ever stop? Where does action and practice fall into the picture?" Imām Aḥmad promptly replied, علمنا هذا هو العمل. Our teaching and learning of *aḥādīth* is practice itself. In essence, these luminaries weren't only people of words, but rather they possessed the reality, spirit and light of knowledge within themselves. In such an instance, study and any other intellectual pursuits become action.

¹ For an exhaustive list, refer to *Shuyūkh al-Imām Abī Dāwūd as-Sijistānī fī Kitāb as-Sunan* by Mawlānā Ḥabīb ar-Raḥmān al-'Ā'zamī of Darul 'Ulūm Deoband.

His Students

It is evident that Imām Abū Dāwūd had thousands of students. However, of those that became well-known and reached the level of *Imāmah* are Imām Tirmidhī and Imām Nasa'ī. Imām Tirmidhī has narrated from Imām Abū Dāwūd in his *Sunan* one narration towards the end of *Kitāb ad-Da'awāt* and another in *Kitāb al-Manāqib* regarding the virtues of the *Ahl al-Bayt*. Besides these two places, he mentions Imām Abū Dāwūd in a further two places while commenting on some narrators of *aḥādīth*.

It is an established fact that Imām Nasa'ī was a student of Imām Abū Dāwūd. However, it cannot be categorically said whether Imām Nasa'ī narrated any *aḥādīth* in his *Sunan* from Imām Abū Dāwūd. Imām Nasa'ī had another teacher that was also known as Abū Dāwūd and his name was also Sulaymān. His full name is Sulaymān ibn Sayf al-Ḥarrānī and Imām Nasa'ī narrates extensively from him in his *Sunan*. He sometimes refers to him by his patronymic alone, and sometimes with his name aswell. Regarding some of the places where Imām Nasa'ī only mentions the patronymic, it is the opinion of Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar and others that he means Imām Abū Dāwūd as-Sijistānī.

I have not seen Imām Nasa'ī mention anywhere in the entire book 'Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath' or even 'as-Sijistānī.' As Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar considers Abū Dāwūd in some instances to be Imām Abū Dāwūd as-Sijistānī, he has added the symbol for *Sunan an-Nasa'ī* alongside the name of Imām Abū Dāwūd in *Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*.¹

Furthermore, it would not be improper to mention Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal amongst the students of Imām Abū Dāwūd, despite being a revered teacher of Imām Abū Dāwūd, as he had heard one *ḥadīth* from Imām Abū Dāwūd. This is indeed a great honour for Imām Abū Dāwūd.

His Family

Imām Abū Dāwūd had a son called Abū Bakr 'Abdullāh ibn Abī Dāwūd who

¹ This symbol denotes that Imām Abū Dāwūd is a narrator of *Sunan an-Nasa'ī*.

was also a great *muḥaddith*. He studied *ḥadīth* with his father and is considered to be from the senior *ḥuffāz* of Baghdad. Thus, he was an Imām and the son of an Imām.¹ I recently saw a compilation of *ḥadīth* authored by him titled *al-Ba'th*, which was recently published in Beirut. He has gathered in this small booklet of approximately fifty or sixty pages many *aḥādīth* pertaining to the conditions of death, the grave and resurrection. He has collected many rare *aḥādīth* within the collection.

We also find mention of a brother in the biographies of Imām Abū Dāwūd. Ḥāfiẓ Dhahabī mentions in *Siyar 'A'lām an-Nubalā'* that he had an elder brother named Muḥammad ibn al-Ash'ath, and that he would accompany Imām Abū Dāwūd on his travels in the pursuit of knowledge.

His Inclination to Fiqh

Compared to the authors of the remaining *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*, Imām Abū Dāwūd had an overwhelming inclination towards *fiqh*. Due to this inclination, Shaykh Abū Ishāq ash-Shīrāzī has only mentioned Imām Abū Dāwūd from the six Imāms in his book, *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā'*. This is because Imām Abū Dāwūd has only recorded narrations pertaining to rulings with great care in his *Sunan*. Thus, narrations pertaining to *faḍā'il al-'a'māl* and *zuhd* cannot be found in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* contrary to the other books. In this regard, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* lacks many chapters, but the vast collection of *aḥādīth* pertaining to rulings found in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* cannot be found in the other books. Imām Ghazālī has stated that this book alone from the books of *ḥadīth* is sufficient for the *mujtahid*. Zakariyyā as-Sājī says:

"كُتِبَ اللَّهُ عز وجل أصل الإسلام وكتاب السنن لأبي داود عهد الإسلام."

Visit to Bīr Budā'ah and an Academic Finding

Imām Abū Dāwūd mentions that he visited *Bīr Budā'ah* when he went to Madinah. He measured its width and found it to be seven handspans wide. When the gate-keeper opened the gate for him, he asked if it had been renovated since the time of the Prophet ﷺ. He was told that it had not been

¹ See: *Siyar 'A'lām an-Nubalā'*, 13:221.

renovated. He says that he found the water to be off-coloured. Imām Abū Dāwūd mentions his visit to *Bīr Budā'ah* in his *Sunan* alongside the *ḥadīth* of *Bīr Budā'ah* under the chapter of *Aḥkām al-Miyāh*. In previous times, the journey of *Ḥajj* and visits to Madinah were a great means for the acquisition of knowledge and academic findings.

Scholars' Praise of Imām Abū Dāwūd

Ibn Mandah said, "Four people are worthy of mention from those that painstakingly sifted through the collections of *aḥādīth* and separated the sound from the unsound. They are: Imām Bukhārī, Imām Muslim, Imām Abū Dāwūd and Imām Nasa'ī."

Mūsā ibn Hārūn said, "Abū Dāwūd was created in this life for *ḥadīth*, and in the hereafter for paradise. I have not seen anyone better than him."

The statement of Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī regarding Imām Abū Dāwūd is famous. When Imām Abū Dāwūd completed his compilation, Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī exclaimed upon seeing it:

"أَلَيْنَ لِأَبِي دَاوُدَ الْحَدِيثُ كَمَا أَلَيْنَ لِدَاوُدَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ الْحَدِيدُ."

"The science of *ḥadīth* has been made easy for Imām Abū Dāwūd just as iron was made soft for Dāwūd ﷺ." Allah says:

﴿وَأَلَنَّا لَهُ الْحَدِيدَ﴾ (سبأ: ١٠)

Ḥāfiẓ Abū Ṭāhir as-Silafī expressed the statement of Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī in the form of a couplet:

لان الحديث وعلمه بكماله	لإمام أهله أبي داودا
مثل الذي لان الحديد وسبكه	لنبي أهل زمانه داودا

Some scholars have said that Imām Abū Dāwūd resembled his teacher Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal in character and manners, and he in turn resembled his teacher Wakī', and he resembled his teacher Sufyān, and he resembled his teacher Manṣūr, and he resembled his teacher Ibrāhīm, and he resembled his teacher 'Alqamah, and he resembled his teacher 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd, and he resembled the Prophet ﷺ.

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¹ See: *Siyar 'A'lām an-Nubalā'*, 13:221.

The Incident of Sahl ibn 'Abdillāh at-Tustarī

It has been reported regarding the great saint of his time Sahl ibn 'Abdillāh at-Tustarī, that he once met Imām Abū Dāwūd and said to him, "I have a need for you." Imām Abū Dāwūd enquired regarding his need, so he said he would only divulge it if Imām Abū Dāwūd would fulfil it. Imām Abū Dāwūd reassured him that if he was able to do so, he would surely fulfil the need. Sahl ibn 'Abdillāh at-Tustarī said, "Bring out for me your tongue with which you narrate the Prophet's *aḥādīth* so that I may kiss it." Imām Abū Dāwūd drew out his tongue and Sahl ibn 'Abdillāh at-Tustarī kissed it.

Imām Abū Dāwūd's School in Fiqh

There is a difference of opinion regarding which school of *fiqh* Imām Abū Dāwūd followed. Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī writes in his book *Al-Inṣāf fi Bayān Asbāb al-Ikhtilāf*:²

"وأما أبو داود والترمذي فهما مجتهدان منتسبان إلى أحمد وإسحاق."

Imām Abū Dāwūd is a follower of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal in principles and fundamentals, but was not a follower in subsidiary matters. He would derive rulings based on the principles of Imām Aḥmad, irrespective of whether his derivations were in conformity to the school of Imām Aḥmad or not. Such a *mujtahid* is called a *mujtahid muntasib*. The *mujtahid* who does not follow anyone in principles nor subsidiary issues is called a *mujtahid muṭlaq*.³

Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz has mentioned in *Bustān al-Muḥaddithīn* that some have said he is *Shāfi'ī*, while others have said he is *Ḥanbalī*. Shaykh Zakariyyā has mentioned in the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī* that Tāj ad-Dīn as-Subkī has listed Imām Abū Dāwūd in his book, *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shāfi'iyyah*, inferring by this that he considers him to be *Shāfi'ī*. Nawāb Siddīq Ḥasan Khan has similarly considered him to be *Shāfi'ī*. Shaykh Abū Ishāq ash-Shīrāzī has listed him under the adherents of Imām Aḥmad in his book

¹ Tustar is the Arabicisation of the word Shooshtar, a city in western Iran.

² Ad-Dihlawī, *Al-Inṣāf fi Bayān Asbāb al-Ikhtilāf*, p. 85.

³ For a detailed explanation of the classes of *fuqahā'*, refer to Ibn 'Abidīn's *Sharḥ 'Uqūd Rasm al-Muftī* where he has divided the *fuqahā'* into seven categories.

Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā'. It is written in *Al-'Arf ash-Shadhi*:

"المشهور أنه شافعي والحق أنه حنبلي كالنسائي."

Similarly, it has been written in *Fayḍ al-Bārī* on the authority of Ibn Taymiyyah that he was *Ḥanbalī*. Like 'Allāmah Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī, it is also the opinion Shaykh Zakariyyā that Imām Abū Dāwūd was an ardent *Ḥanbalī*. Shaykh Zakariyyā has also mentioned some indicating factors in this regard, which will be mentioned soon. It would be appropriate to discuss the schools of *fiqh* of the remaining five Imāms.

The Schools of Fiqh of the Remaining Authors of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*

There is a difference of opinion regarding Imām Bukhārī's *madhhab*. It is famous regarding him that he is *Shāfi'ī* and thus, Tāj ad-Dīn as-Subkī has listed him in his book *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shāfi'iyyah*. It is the opinion of 'Allāmah Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī and Shaykh Zakariyyā that Imām Bukhārī was a *mujtahid*. 'Allāmah Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī says that the apparent reason why many have thought Imām Bukhārī to be *Shāfi'ī* is that he is in agreement with the *Shāfi'iyyah* in a few controversial issues like *raf' al-yadayn* and *jahr bi 'l-āmīn*. He goes on to say that Imām Bukhārī's agreement with the *Ḥanafīyyah* is no less than that of his agreement with the *Shāfi'iyyah*. Thus, Imām Bukhārī's view is in line with that of the *Ḥanafīyyah* regarding *wuḍū'* after kissing, *wuḍū'* after touching the genitals, the issue of *qullatayn*, and *jahr bi 'l-basmalah* to name a few.

Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī says regarding Imām Muslim:

"لا أعلم مذهبه بالتحقيق."

The chapter headings that have been included in the margins of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* were not formulated by Imām Muslim. Rather, they were introduced by Imām Nawawī.¹ It is a well-known fact that the *madhhab* of any compiler of

¹ This is with regards to the chapter headings prevalent in many editions today. However, Shaykh Yūnus Jaunpūrī mentions that Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣbahānī, Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ al-Mālikī, and Jamāl ad-Dīn az-Zayla'ī have explicitly attributed chapter headings to Imām Muslim, indicating that Imām Muslim formulated his own chapter headings, and in his opinion, this is more accurate. *Al-Yawāqīt al-Ghāliyah*, 3:336.

ḥadīth can be gauged by the chapter headings he formulates, but in the case of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, it is bereft of any chapter headings from Imām Muslim. Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khan has documented Imām Muslim as *Shāfi'ī* in *al-Ḥiṭṭah fī Dhikr aṣ-Ṣiḥāḥ as-Sittah* and *Iṭḥāf an-Nubalā'*. In *Mā Tamassu ilayh al-Ḥājah*, Mawlānā 'Abd ar-Rashīd Nu'mānī has mentioned an opinion¹ that Imām Muslim was *Mālikī* due to the fact that some scholars raised their chain of narration for the *ḥadīth al-musalsal bi 'l-Mālikīyyah* to Imām Muslim.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah has clarified regarding Imām Nasa'ī that he was *Hanbalī* and this is also the opinion of 'Allāmah Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī. Tāj ad-Dīn as-Subkī has listed him in his book *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shāfi'iyyah*, and it was the opinion of Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī and Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khan that Imām Nasa'ī was *Shāfi'ī*.

Imām Tirmidhī was *Shāfi'ī* in Fiqh. He never openly opposed Imām Shāfi'ī in any issue except the issue of *ibrād bi 'z-Zuhr*. Imām Tirmidhī has objected to the conditions stipulated by Imām Shāfi'ī for *ibrād bi 'z-Zuhr* stating that the conditions stipulated contradict the unrestrictive nature of the *ḥadīth*. It is the opinion of Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī that Imām Tirmidhī was a *mujtahid muntasib* towards Imām Aḥmad and Ishāq, as has previously been mentioned under Imām Abū Dāwūd's school in *fiqh*.

Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī says regarding Imām Ibn Mājah that he was most probably *Shāfi'ī*.

The Factors that Indicate Imām Abū Dāwūd was Hanbalī

Shaykh Zakariyyā used to say that Imām Abū Dāwūd was an ardent *Hanbalī* and this can be substantiated by Imām Abū Dāwūd's chapter headings. He has given great care and consideration to mentioning the proofs of the *Hanābilah* compared to the other schools. He has titled a chapter *باب البول قائما* and under this heading, presented such proofs whereby the permissibility can be established, as is the *madhhab* of the *Hanābilah*. He does not mention the proofs of the majority.

Similarly, in the issue of making *wuḍū'* with the remaining water of a

¹ This was the inclination of 'Allāmah Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abd al-Laṭīf ibn al-'Allāmah al-Makhdūm Muḥammad Hāshim at-Tatawī as-Sindhī. *Al-Yawāqīt al-Ghāliyah*, 3:315.

female, it can be gauged from his methodology that Imām Abū Dāwūd's view is in line with the *Hanābilah*. He firstly mentions the narrations establishing permissibility and thereafter, those which indicate impermissibility, which is the preferred opinion of the *Hanābilah*. The view of the majority would demand that the narrations be ordered in the reverse order; firstly, the narrations which mention impermissibility and thereafter, those establishing permissibility.

Imām Abū Dāwūd titles a chapter *باب الوضوء من لحوم الإبل* and then establishes the practice through narrations, as is the view of the *Hanābilah*.

In the chapters relating to *Imāmah*, Imām Abū Dāwūd establishes a chapter under the heading of *باب الإمام يصلي من قعود*. This chapter discusses whether the followers should perform *Ṣalāh* sitting or standing in the instance when their Imām performs sitting due to an excuse. The majority opinion is that they should perform standing, while Imām Aḥmad is of the view that they should also sit in adherence to their Imām. In this regard, Imām Abū Dāwūd only mentions the proof of the *Hanābilah*:

"إذا صلى جالسا فصلوا جلوسا."

He neither establishes a chapter for the majority opinion, nor mentions the proofs. The proof of the majority is the incident of the final sickness of the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ led the *Ṣalāh* while seated, and the companions performed standing. This was the final practice of the Prophet ﷺ. The famous commentator of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, Imām Khaṭṭābī has also expressed surprise at how Imām Abū Dāwūd, contrary to his normal practice, has disregarded the proof of the majority on this occasion, i.e., the incident of the Prophet ﷺ's final sickness. His words are as follows:

"فلست أدري كيف أغفل بذكر هذه القصة وهي من أمهات السنن وإليه ذهب أكثر الفقهاء."

This is the opinion of Shaykh Zakariyyā and his explanation in this regard. However, I have observed that Imām Abū Dāwūd has established chapters in his *Sunan* which are contrary to the view of the *Hanābilah*. Thus, the claim that Imām Abū Dāwūd was an ardent *Hanbalī* is a matter of contention.

N.B. Some scholars have stated that when certain *muḥaddithūn* are deemed

to be *Shāfi'ī* or *Mālikī*, it does not mean that they are followers or absolute adherents of the respective Imāms. Rather they are *mujtahids* in their own right, and the *ijtihād* of a certain *muḥaddith* is in accordance with a certain Imām while the *ijtihād* of another is in accordance with another.

The Followed Imāms and the Non-Followed

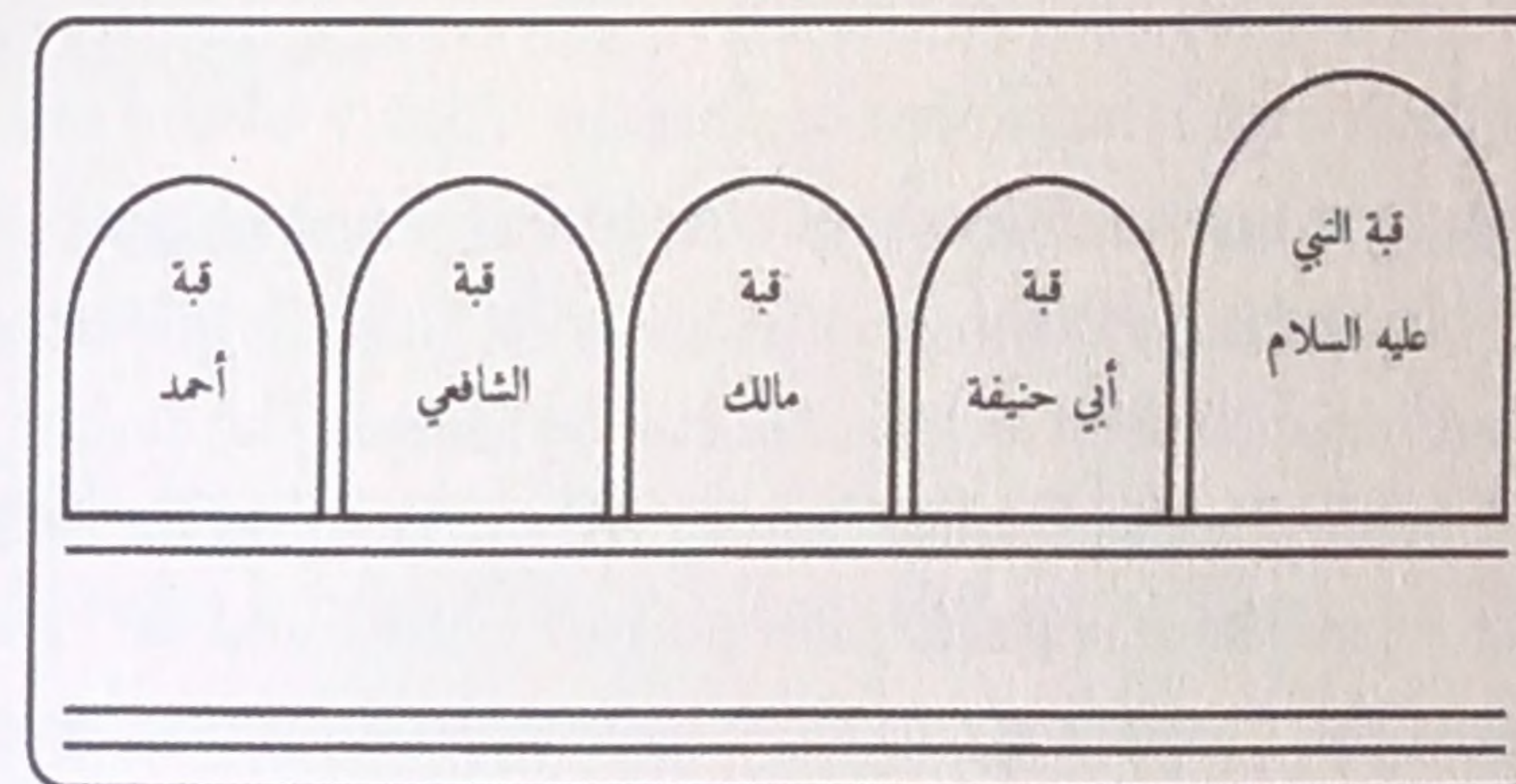
It is necessary to know that there are two types of Imāms; the followed and the non-followed. The first are those whose *madhāhib* prevailed and were followed, and their opinions were documented and preserved. These *madhāhib* amongst the *Ahl as-Sunnah wa 'l-Jamā'ah* are four; i.e., the *madhāhib* of the four Imāms. Adherence to one of these schools is very easy as their *fiqh* has been compiled and documented. Imām Bukhārī and others are undoubtedly from the *mujtahidūn* of the *muḥaddithūn*, but they are not of the followed Imāms. The *madhāhib* of Imāms like Sufyān ath-Thawrī and Imām Awzā'ī were prevalent and followed for a few centuries, and thereafter, ceased to exist. The *fiqh* of Sufyān ath-Thawrī lived until the fifth century, and thereafter, became extinct. Similarly, the *fiqh* of Imām Awzā'ī survived for two centuries. This honour was only bestowed upon the four Imāms that adherence to their *madhāhib* has survived until today, and they will continuously be followed until the end of times, if Allah wills. In this time, it is not possible to follow any way besides that of the four Imāms.

An Intuition of 'Allāmah 'Abd al-Wahhāb ash-Sha'rānī

'Allāmah 'Abd al-Wahhāb ash-Sha'rānī has also mentioned what has been stated above. He further mentions an intuition he had expressing the importance of the four *madhāhib*. He writes that he saw the gravestones of the four Imāms besides a river in Jannah called *Nahr al-Ḥayāt*. He has drawn a depiction of the four gravestones in his book *Al-Mizān al-Kubrā*. He has also depicted the gravestone of the Prophet ﷺ next to the four gravestones. Thus, there are five gravestones besides the river in total; that of the Prophet ﷺ, that of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah next to it, thereafter Imām Mālik, thereafter Imām Shāfi'ī, and lastly Imām Aḥmad. The river is that river in Jannah which is known as *Nahr al-Ḥayāt*, and exists in this world as the blessed

Sharī'ah. He says that these Imāms possess a special deputyship of the Prophet ﷺ. They play an important role in guiding the *ummah* of the Prophet ﷺ to the *Sharī'ah* of the Prophet ﷺ, for which it can be said that they are not detached from the Prophet ﷺ in this world, and nor will they be in the hereafter.

He further states that the reason he drew the gravestone of the Prophet ﷺ next to those of the Imāms is because they only reached the lofty status that they had achieved through adherence to the Prophet ﷺ's *Sharī'ah*. Finally, he clarifies that the order in which he drew the gravestones was not based on any rational or theoretical explanation, but as he saw them in Jannah in his intuition. Shaykh Zakariyyā has also copied this diagram in his book *Sharī'at wa Ṭarīqat kā Talāzum*.



N.B. It can be observed from the previous discussion that none of the authors of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* were *Ḥanafī*. However, in the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī*, Shaykh Zakariyyā lists approximately thirty-five senior *muḥaddithūn* that were from amongst the students of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah or adherents to the *fiqh* of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah. It is an undeniable truth that all of these *muḥaddithūn* are considered to be the teachers or teachers of the teachers of Imām Bukhārī or the authors of the remaining *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*.¹

Imām Abū Dāwūd's Selected Narrations

Imām Abū Dāwūd mentions that he wrote five hundred thousand

¹ See: *Al-Wardah al-Ḥādīrah fī Aḥādīth Talāmīdh al-Imām al-'A'zam wa Aḥādīth al-'Ulamā' al-Aḥnāf fī 'l-Jāmi' aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ li 'l-Imām al-Bukhārī* by Muḥammad Muḥīd ar-Raḥmān ash-Shāṭghāmī.

narrations of the Prophet ﷺ. From these, he selected four thousand eight hundred and mentioned them in his *Sunan*. He further says:

"ويكفي الإنسان لدينه من ذلك أربعة أحاديث."

From those that he selected for his *Sunan*, four *aḥādīth* are sufficient for a believer in matters of their religion. They are:

١. إنما الأعمال بالنيات
٢. من حسن إسلام المرء تركه ما لا يعنيه
٣. لا يكون المؤمن مؤمناً حتى يرضى لأخيه ما يرضى لنفسه
٤. الحلال بين والحرام بين وبينهما أمور مشتهيات فمن اتقى الشبهات استبرأ لدينه وعرضه

Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz has said that the first *ḥadīth* is sufficient for the rectification of worship, the second is sufficient for the preservation of the valuable moment of one's life, the third is sufficient to fulfil the rights of the creation, and the fourth is sufficient to abstain from doubtful matters.

Mention of these four narrations can be found in many books of *tarājim*. At the end of the Indian edition of *Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ*, a booklet called *Al-Ikmāl* by the author of *Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ* can be found. The author mentions these four narrations in this booklet under the entry of Imām Abū Dāwūd.

May Allah repay these *muḥaddithūn* on our behalf and on behalf of the entire *ummah* of the Prophet ﷺ, as they have indeed shown compassion to us and fulfilled the rights of well-wishing. They compiled books containing a few thousand *aḥādīth* from hundreds of thousands, and further selected a handful so that it would be easy for us to practice upon the religion. They made every endeavour so that our life in this world and the hereafter would be blissful, and now it is upon us to keep these *aḥādīth* in front of us in every facet of our lives. How much could one speak on the benefit and comprehensiveness of these selected narrations? In Imām Abū Dāwūd's own words, they are the quintessence of thousands of narrations.

Shaykh Zakariyyā mentioned in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* lecture and also in the sixth volume of *Awjāz al-Masālik* that Imām Abū Ḥanīfah selected these very four narrations before Imām Abū Dāwūd. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah had also included a fifth narration:

"المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده."

Shaykh Zakariyyā further mentioned that Imām Abū Dāwūd possibly omitted the fifth narration as the subject has already been discussed in the third narration.

The first narration is extremely important and this is the very reason that countless *muḥaddithūn* have initiated their books with this narration. Shaykh Zakariyyā would mention that the reality of *taṣawwuf* is the rectification of intentions. A person should rectify their intention in whatever they do, whether it be trade, cultivation, writing, teaching and learning, or even working as a labourer. A good intention is sufficient to turn a permissible action into worship.¹ On one occasion, he mentioned that the beginning of our *sulūk* and *taṣawwuf* is at إنما الأعمال بالنيات, i.e., the rectification of intentions, and it ends at أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه.

Imām Abū Dāwūd's Works

Imām Abū Dāwūd has many works in the field of *ḥadīth* besides his *Sunan*. Some exist to this day, while others are no longer available.

1. *Marāsīl Abī Dāwūd* - This is a concise collection of *mursal* narrations, and has been printed with some editions of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*.
2. *Ar-Radd alā 'l-Qadariyyah*
3. *An-Nāsikh wa 'l-Mansūkh*
4. *Mā Tafarrada bihī ahl al-Amṣār* - This would apparently mean those

¹ An incident of Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī and Mu'adh ibn Jabal comes to mind which is narrated in *Kitāb al-Ḥudūd* in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. The narration is very long, and I will mention the ending portion for the sake of brevity. Both of the aforementioned companions were conversing, enquiring about the condition of the other and the practices of each in acts of worship. Each of them mentioned their routines, Firstly Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī described his worship, and thereafter, Mu'adh ibn Jabal said:

"وأما أنا فأرجو في نومتي ما أرجو في قومتي."

He explained that he is unable to stay awake the entire night and stand in worship, so he sleeps for a portion of the night and wakes up and worships too. However, he says that he is hopeful of a reward for his sleeping, just as he is hopeful of a reward for his worship. The purpose of mentioning this incident is that when a person's intention is correct and he seeks the hereafter, he makes the hereafter his objective. In this way, he acquires the reward of worship from actions which are permissible like sleeping too. MA

narrations whose narrators were all residents of a specific city. For example, they were all of Basra, or they were all of Kufa. He has gathered narrations of this type in this book. It is the habit of Imām Abū Dāwūd in his *Sunan* to comment on such *aḥādīth* saying:

"هذا الحديث رواه كلهم بصريون."

This is known as subtleties in chains of narration.

5. *Faḍā'il al-Anṣār*
6. *Musnad Mālik ibn Anas*
7. *Al-Masā'il*
8. *Kitāb Bad' al-Waḥy* - Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar has mentioned this in the first volume of *Tahdhīb at-Tahdhīb*.

An interesting point to note is that Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar has mentioned the narrators of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* in his book *Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*. He has also added some narrators who do not narrate in the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*, while adding the word 'tamyīz' in the entry to differentiate. This means that this narrator is not from the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*. He has allocated symbols to denote where the narrations of the particular narrator can be found. Below is a list of those symbols.

Book	Symbol	Book	Symbol
Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah	ع	Al-Adab al-Mufrad	بخ
Sunan Arba'ah	٤	Marāsīl Abī Dāwūd	مد
Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī	خ	Ar-Radd alā 'l-Qadariyyah	قد
Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim	م	An-Nāsikh wa 'l-Mansūkh	خد
Sunan Abī Dāwūd	د	Mā Tafarrada bihī ahl al-Amṣār	ف
Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī	ت	Musnad Mālik ibn Anas	كد
Sunan an-Nasa'ī	س	Al-Masā'il	ل
Sunan Ibn Mājah	ق	Faḍā'il al-Anṣār	صد

From this approach of Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar, we learn of the attention the *muḥaddithīn* afforded to the books of Imām Abū Dāwūd.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Name & Reason of Naming

The name of Imām Abū Dāwūd's book is *As-Sunan*. *Sunan* is the name given to that type of *ḥadīth* book in which *aḥādīth* are gathered and structured according to the chapters of *fiqh*. This is the same structure in Imām Abū Dāwūd's book. Thus, the first chapter is *Kitāb at-Tahārah*, followed by *Kitāb aṣ-Ṣalāh* and *Kitāb az-Zakāh*. This is the structure of the *fuqahā'*.

It has already been mentioned that *aḥādīth* are of eight topics, and the book in which all eight can be found will be classed as a *Jāmi'*. However, as *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* does not contain all of these eight topics, it will not be classed as a *Jāmi'*. It does not contain the chapters of *tafsīr*, *tārikh*, *maghāzī*, and *riqāq*. On the contrary, *Sunan at-Tirmidhī* can be classed as both; it contains all of the eight necessary chapters to be classed as a *Jāmi'*, and it is structured according to the chapters of *fiqh*, making it a *Sunan*.

The *muḥaddithūn* served the *ḥadīth* in many ways, and compiled collections of *ḥadīth* in various manners. Every type of compilation has a different name. Some are *Sunan* and some *Jāmi'*, some are *Mu'jam* whilst others are *Musnad*, some are *Mustakhraj* and some are *Mustadrak*, etc. There are many types and it is of paramount importance and extremely beneficial for a student of knowledge to acquaint themselves with these technical terms. Shaykh Zakariyyā has extensively mentioned the types of *ḥadīth* collections with examples in the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī*, and I have also done so in the introduction to *Al-Fayḍ as-Samā'ī*. You should all take out some time to study these issues, as nothing can be attained without effort. You will study in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that it has been mentioned in one place, لا يستطيع العلم براحة الجسم.

بقدر الكد تكتسب المعالي
ومن رام العلا من غير كد
تروم العز ثم تمام ليلاً
ومن طلب العلى سهر الليالي
أضاع العمر في طلب الحال
يغوص البحر من طلب الآلي

Shaykh Zakariyyā would often cite this poem to students.

Purpose of Compilation

Shaykh Zakariyyā would say that the purpose behind the compilation of this book was to gather the *aḥādīth* which the Imāms had used as proofs of their respected opinions and views. Imām Abū Dāwūd intended that the proof of every Imām should be found in his book, and he succeeded in this. Imām Ghazālī mentions that *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* is sufficient for a *mujtahid* in all that he may require.

‘Allāmah Ibn Qayyim mentions regarding the purpose of compilation that when certain sceptics and slanderers began hurling abuse at the *a’immah* and raised objections regarding their lack of *aḥādīth*, Imām Abū Dāwūd intended to compile a book with a unique methodology that would incorporate the proofs of all the *a’immah*, whereby the cynics would have no room to raise any further objections. In the letter he wrote addressing the people of Makkah, Imām Abū Dāwūd himself states that his book contains the principles and proofs of Imām Mālik, Sufyān ath-Thawrī and Imām Shāfi’ī. Hence, Ibn al-‘A‘rābī states that if a person has no other books besides the Qur’ān and *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, they would be sufficient for him.

Era of Compilation

It cannot be said with certainty when the author completed the compilation of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. However, some accounts have it that when Imām Abū Dāwūd completed the compilation of his book, he presented it to his teacher Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, who approved of it. Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal passed away in the year 241 AH, from which it can be understood that *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* was compiled before this year.

The Rank of Sunan Abī Dāwūd in Order of Study

A rank or status can be ascertained from two aspects; the aspect of studying and learning, i.e., what the order of study should be, and secondly the aspect of authenticity and soundness. The order of study which we have heard from our teachers is that *Jāmi’ at-Tirmidhī* should be studied after *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ*. This is because the student should first be acquainted with the *madhāhib* of the *a’immah*. This can be found in *Jāmi’ at-Tirmidhī*. After

narrating a *ḥadīth*, Imām Tirmidhī mentions the issue that is established from that particular *ḥadīth*, along with any differences of opinion amongst the *a’immah* and their *madhāhib*.

After being acquainted with the views and opinions of the *a’immah*, the next stage is knowing their proofs and evidences. This can be found abundantly in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* and thus, this should be studied next.

Thereafter, the student should endeavour to learn the methodology and process of extraction, and how a particular view was formed from a certain *ḥadīth*. This was Imām Bukhārī’s forte, and this is the very reason he sometimes mentions one *ḥadīth* in multiple places, occasionally in more than ten places, as a multitude of issues can be established from a single *ḥadīth*. Thus, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* should be studied after *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*.

When the student has understood the many opinions, their evidences and how these opinions were derived from the respective proofs, the need arises to further consolidate these opinions with further proofs and evidences and this can be found in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Imām Muslim narrates a multitude of narrations on a single topic from various chains, and they can be found clustered in one location. Therefore, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* should be studied fourth.

When all of the above has been acquired, the need arises to closely scrutinise these narrations for any deficiencies and hidden defects [*‘ilal*]. This can be acquired through study of *Sunan an-Nasa’ī*, as Imām Nasa’ī takes great care in mentioning these intricate details.

This is the order of the *uṣūl khamsah* with respect to study. There were only five authentic books according to the *mutaqaddimūn*. Thus, Imām Nawawī only makes mention of these five books as the *Ṣiḥāḥ* in his *Taqrīb*. Some scholars deemed the authentic books to be six instead of five which are known as the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*, and they made *Sunan Ibn Mājah* the sixth. Thus, this should be studied last, as Imām Ibn Mājah has mentioned many rare *aḥādīth* in his book, and acquainting oneself with uncommon *aḥādīth* should be done last.

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This order of study can only be maintained if a single teacher teaches these books in this order one after another. However, if there are multiple teachers that teach different books in their respective periods and lessons as

is the norm in our institutes, then to maintain this order of study would be rather difficult. As Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī would singlehandedly teach all the final year books, such a system could be easily implemented. Nevertheless, even if the opportunity never arises to practice upon whatever has thus far been mentioned regarding the order of study, the methodologies of the authors of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* and the distinguishing features of their books have been mentioned, which is beneficial and insightful for the student.

The Ranks of the Books of Ḥadīth

The second type of ranking is according to authenticity and soundness. Before ascertaining the rank of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, we should discuss the ranks of the books of *ḥadīth* as there are thousands of compilations of *ḥadīth*. Not all of these are worthy of being used as proofs and evidences, as they differ in their levels of soundness and weakness. Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz has authored a very beneficial and concise booklet on this topic which is titled *Mā Yajibu Ḥifẓuhū li 'n-Nāẓir*. In this booklet, Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz has mentioned the ranks of the various books of *ḥadīth* according to their soundness and weakness. Shaykh Zakariyyā would mention the importance of this book in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* lectures. He would say that this booklet is actually worth memorising and Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz named it very aptly. He would then mention all the ranks of the books that Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz has mentioned in his book. Furthermore, he has also quoted these ranks in the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī*. Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz mentions that there are five ranks of *ḥadīth* books. They are as follows:

1. Those books in which all the narrations are worthy of being used as proofs and evidences, and they are all *ṣaḥīḥ*, which is the highest level of a strong *ḥadīth*. Most of the books which are known as *Ṣiḥāḥ* fall in this category, along with some others too. In this category, Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz has listed *Muwatta' Mālik*, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaymah*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibbān*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Awānah*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn as-Sakan*, *Al-Muntaqā li ibn al-Jārūd* and *Mustadrak Ḥākim*.
2. Those books in which the narrations are fit to be used as evidences. Even

though all of the narrations of these books do not reach the level of *ṣaḥīḥ*, it is not necessary for a *ḥadīth* to be *ṣaḥīḥ* in order for it to be fit for use as an evidence. A *ḥadīth* which is *ḥasan* can also be used as proof. The books in this category are: *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī*, *Sunan an-Nasa'ī* and *Musnad Aḥmad*. The narrations in *Musnad* which have been classed as *ḍa'īf* are very close to the level of *ḥasan*.

3. Those books in which all types of narrations can be found. Some of the narrations within these books are fit to be used as evidences while others are not. For example, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, *Musnad Abī Dāwūd at-Tayālīsī*, *Musnad Abī Ya'lā al-Mawṣilī*, *Musnad al-Bazzār*, *Muṣannaḥ 'Abd ar-Razzāq*, *Muṣannaḥ Abī bakr ibn Abī Shaybah*, *Al-Ma'ājim ath-Thalāthah li 't-Ṭabarānī*, *Sunan al-Bayhaqī*, *Shu'ab al-Īmān li 'l-Bayhaqī*, *Sunan ad-Dāraquṭnī*, *Al-Hilyah li Abī Nu'aym*, the books of *Tafsīr* like *Tafsīr Ibn Mardūyah* and *Ad-Durr al-Manthūr fi 't-Tafsīr bi 'l-Ma'thūr*, and all those books of *ḥadīth* which have been compiled in *tafsīr*.
4. Those books in which all the narrations will be classed as *ḍa'īf*, on the condition that they be found in these books only and not any books of the previous three categories, e.g., *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* of Ḥakīm at-Tirmidhī, Daylamī's *Musnad al-Firdaws*, *Al-Kāmil li ibn 'Adī*, *Kitāb ad-Ḍu'afā' li 'l-'Uqaylī*, and books of *Tārīkh* like *Tārīkh al-Khulafā'*, *Tārīkh Ibn 'Asākir*, *Tārīkh Ibn an-Najjār*, *Tārīkh Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī*, etc.
5. The fifth category is of the books of *mawḍū'āt* in which only *mawḍū'* narrations have been mentioned. *Muḥaddithūn* have sifted through numerous books in an effort to gather *mawḍū'* narrations so as to save the general scholars and masses from falling into deception with regards to them. Ibn al-Jawzī's work *Al-Mawḍū'āt al-Kubrā* is a famous work in this genre. There are also many other works like Suyūṭī's *Al-La'ālī al-Maṣnū'ah fi 'l-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍū'ah*, *Al-Mawḍū'āt al-Kubrā* and *Al-Maṣnū' fi Ma'rifat al-Mawḍū'* both of Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī, *Tadhkirah al-Mawḍū'āt* of Shaykh Muḥammad Ṭāhir al-Pattānī, *Tanzīh ash-Sharī'ah 'an 'l-Akḥbār ash-Shanī'ah* of Ibn 'Irāq, Shawkānī's *Al-Fawā'id al-Majmū'ah*, and Qazwīnī's *Mawḍū'āt al-Maṣābiḥ*.

From the above discussion, we learn that the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* and *Muwatta'*

Mālik are of the first category, *Sunan Ibn Mājah* is of the third, and *Sunan Thalāthah* (*Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī*, *Sunan an-Nasa'i*) are of the second category.

N.B. In *Al-'Ujālah an-Nāfi'ah*, Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz has mentioned four categories of *ḥadīth* books, and in *Mā Yajibu Ḥifẓuhū li 'n-Nāẓir* he has mentioned five as has been mentioned. An answer to this is that he distributed the categories according to soundness and fame in *Al-'Ujālah an-Nāfi'ah*, while in *Mā Yajibu Ḥifẓuhū li 'n-Nāẓir* the distribution is according to soundness and weakness. Thus, a further category was introduced.¹

N.B. In Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī's ranking of *ḥadīth* books, he has deemed the soundness and strength of a *ḥadīth* to be based on the book. Thus, Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī gives precedence to the *aḥādīth* of the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* over others. In other words, a *ḥadīth* is given precedence merely because of its incorporation within the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*. This is the very methodology of Ibn Aṣ-Ṣalāḥ. However, Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith ad-Dihlawī does not base the soundness of a *ḥadīth* by the book, but rather each narration is judged by its own merit, and the soundness is based upon the narrators of the chain of that particular narration and the principles of critical analysis (*naqd*).² This is also the opinion of Ibn al-Humām.

The Order of Ranking Within the Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah

It is an accepted fact that the most authentic book of *ḥadīth* is *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. The phrase is well-known:

أنه أصح الكتب بعد كتاب الله تعالى

However, Imām Shāfi'ī states:

"لا أعلم كتاباً أصح من الموطأ."

This statement of Imām Shāfi'ī was from a time when the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* had not

¹ Another answer for this discrepancy given by Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz himself in *Al-'Ujālah an-Nāfi'ah* is that he has quoted the categorisation of his father, Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī.

² Mawlānā 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Chishtī expounds on this issue under the biography of Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaqq ad-Dihlawī in his Urdu commentary on Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz's *Al-'Ujālah an-Nāfi'ah*, titled *Al-Faw'id al-Jāmi'ah*. This is an excellent and well-researched commentary. MA

yet come into existence. Imām Shāfi'ī passed away in the year 204 AH and Imām Bukhārī was born in 194 AH. Imām Bukhārī was merely ten years old at the time of Imām Shāfi'ī's demise.

The teacher of Imām Ḥākim, Abū 'Alī Nīshāpūrī stated:

"ما تحت أديم السماء كتاب أصح من كتاب مسلم."

Scholars have given multiple explanations for this statement. The most famous answer is that superiority with regards to authenticity was not intended, but rather superiority with respect to the excellent arrangement and order of the book is intended. This is correct because *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* outshines other books in this regard, and also in the subtleties of chains of narration. Imām Muslim arranges a multitude of narrations on a single topic with their various chains all in one place with excellent proficiency. In the beginning of his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* while commenting on *asānīd*, Imām Nawawī expresses this very point with great emphasis and he praises the methodology of Imām Muslim.

Nevertheless, the status of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* is higher than that of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* with regards to authenticity. This can be substantiated by the fact that the number of narrations in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* which have been criticised are more in number than those in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, even though all of these objections have been answered. The number of narrations that are only in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and have been criticised is seventy-eight. The number of narrations that are only in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and have been criticised is one hundred. The number of narrations which can be found in both books and have been criticised is thirty-two. Thus, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* has twenty-two more narrations than *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* which have been the subject of criticism.

Another answer is that Imām Bukhārī compiled his book from a collection of six hundred thousand *aḥādīth*, while Imām Muslim compiled his book from three hundred thousand *aḥādīth*.

After *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* is the most authentic book. Thereafter, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* ranks third according to the majority opinion. Ibn Sayyid an-Nās opines that *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* are of the same calibre. However, this goes against the popular opinion. It is famous that the rank of *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī* comes next, but the research of many scholars suggests that the rank of *Sunan an-Nasa'i* is higher than that of *Jāmi'*

at-Tirmidhī. This was the view of Shaykh Zakariyyā and it would be the most plausible opinion. The objectionable narrations in *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī* which Ibn al-Jawzī has declared as *mawḍū'* are thirty, while those in *Sunan an-Nasa'ī* are only ten. Some Maghribī's went as far as to say that the status of *Sunan an-Nasa'ī* is higher than that of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, as 'Allāmah Sakhāwī has mentioned in *Fath al-Mughīth*.

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Sunan Ibn Mājah & the difference of opinion regarding the sixth of the six books

The *muḥaddithūn* are unanimous that *Sunan Ibn Mājah* ranks last from the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* as it contains many weak narrations. Ḥāfiẓ Dhahabī says that the number of narrations that are unfit to be used as evidence is close to a thousand, and those narrations that are completely rejected are approximately thirty. Ibn al-Jawzī classes these rejected narrations as *mawḍū'*. Ḥāfiẓ

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It is mentioned in the book of Shaykh al-Hind¹ that the entire achievement of Imām Bukhārī is in his chapter headings. There are subtle indications and very abstruse deductions in these chapter headings, from which we can appreciate the intelligence and insight of Imām Bukhārī. Occasionally, no apparent relevance can be understood between the chapter heading and the narrations mentioned within the chapter. Furthermore, some chapter headings seem to be repetitive, but the purpose differs. It is for this very reason that the commentators of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* had to devise a set of principles by which these chapter headings could be deciphered. In the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī*, Shaykh Zakariyyā has firstly quoted the twenty principles set out by Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī, and thereafter the fifteen principles of Shaykh al-Hind. He lastly mentions those principles which he found scattered in the various commentaries of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, or any principle he deduced through careful analysis of the chapter headings. Altogether, he mentions and clearly explains seventy principles with examples for each. In actual fact, he has fulfilled the rights of deciphering the chapters of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* to the best of his ability, although it is famous that the debt of explaining *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* is still due upon this *Ummah*.

The speciality of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* is that Imām Muslim arranges a multitude of narrations on a single topic all in one place with excellent arrangement and he narrates the various chains of a single narration with great skill. This can only be fully appreciated by the *muḥaddithūn*. Students like you and I cannot begin to comprehend these subtleties. Imām Nawawī repeatedly mentions the phenomenal order and arrangement of Imām Muslim. Although there are apparently no chapter heading in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, the book is extremely structured in regards to its topics, such that every capable person would be able to formulate their own chapter headings. Thus, the prevalent chapter headings that are present in the margins are the work of Imām Nawawī. Some people say that the chapter headings set out by Imām Nawawī are not worthy of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and the book is not given its full due with these headings. I would say to such people, if you have the

¹ Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan. This is a small treatise of 72 pages in the Urdu language titled *Al-Abwāb wa 't-Tarājim*. This was Shaykh al-Hind's last and final work, that he penned during his incarceration in Malta.

capability then you should fulfil its due. People derive pleasure out of expressing their opinions and making objections. There is great goodness and blessings in the commentary of Imām Nawawī. He has written a very valuable and comprehensive commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.

The most important factor of *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī* which would require great effort as there is no book on the subject as yet is where Imām Tirmidhī says:

"وفي الباب عن فلان وفلان."

i.e., analysing these narrations that Imām Tirmidhī is referring to and then indicating where they can be found in their respective books.¹

A speciality of *Sunan an-Nasa'ī* is that Imām Nasa'ī occasionally writes following certain narrations:

"قال أبو عبد الرحمن: هذا الحديث خطأ."

The matter that requires analysis in these statements is ascertaining what Imām Nasa'ī is actually critiquing. Furthermore, what would then be a more accurate alternative? The chapter headings of *Sunan an-Nasa'ī* are also of great importance. However, since the chapter headings of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* carry greater weight in this regard, the chapter headings of *Sunan an-Nasa'ī* are generally overlooked. In my opinion, *Kitāb at-Tahārah* in *Sunan an-Nasa'ī* is extremely intricate and difficult. The chapters in this section require a great deal of attention.

The distinguishing feature of *Sunan Ibn Mājah* is that it contains many rare and uncommon narrations. However, a great deal of caution is required when teaching and studying this book as there are many *da'if* narrations, and some *mawḍū'* narrations. The *mawḍū'* and rejected narrations should be pointed out and their classification clarified.

¹ These lecture notes were gathered in 1390 AH and this negation was correct at that time. However, a book was recently published in Karachi on this topic titled *Kashf an-Niqāb 'ammā Yaqūluhū 't-Tirmidhī wa fī 'l-Bāb*. The works of earlier commentators like Ibn Sayyid an-Nās, Ḥāfiẓ 'Irāqī, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar, etc are no longer available. MA

Kashf an-Niqāb 'ammā Yaqūluhū 't-Tirmidhī wa fī 'l-Bāb is incomplete. The work of Ibn Sayyid an-Nās, titled *An-Nafḥ ash-Shadhī Sharḥ Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī* is now available, and the work of Ḥāfiẓ 'Irāqī which is essentially a supplement to *An-Nafḥ ash-Shadhī Sharḥ Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī*, will soon be available too. Ḥāfiẓ 'Irāqī however did not complete this work. There is a complete work in this field by a contemporary scholar named Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥaydar al-Wā'ilī. His work is titled *Nuzḥah al-Albāb fī Qawl 't-Tirmidhī wa fī 'l-Bāb*.

The speciality of *Sharḥ Ma'ānī l-Āthār* of Imām Ṭaḥāwī can be found within its logical evidences (*anzār*). Firstly, Imām Ṭaḥāwī establishes the *Ḥanafī* opinion through narrations. He thereafter proceeds to give a logical reasoning and explanation for why the said opinion is the preferred view.

The Distinguishing features of Sunan Abī Dāwūd

We will now mention some distinguishing features of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* and some practices of Imām Abū Dāwūd.

1. One distinguishing feature of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* is the statement of the author: قال أبو داود. It is extremely important to know what Imām Abū Dāwūd intends by this. Sometimes, he mentions variations in the narrators of the chain and occasionally, with this statement he draws attention to a variation in the wording of the *ḥadīth*. Occasionally, he only indicates towards the multiple chains of the narration. It is an important task to understand what he means by this statement whenever he uses it, and to understand the differences and variations that he is indicating towards. In my knowledge, no commentator of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* has explained these statements of Imām Abū Dāwūd as well as the author of *Badhl al-Majhūd*.
2. One habit of the author is that he sometimes simultaneously mentions two chains of narration for one *ḥadīth*, and he then differentiates between the wordings of both chains. Although many other *muḥaddithūn* do this in their books, it is done very rarely. However, Imām Abū Dāwūd does this often and is possibly why this practice is mentioned amongst the distinguishing features of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*.
3. Another habit of Imām Abū Dāwūd is that he sometimes reconciles between conflicting narrations and discrepancies by means of his chapter headings. A brief glance through *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* will make this practice evident.
4. In the letter Imām Abū Dāwūd wrote addressing the people of Makkah, he clarifies that he has not mentioned in his *Sunan* any *ḥadīth* of a narrator who he deems to be rejected.
5. Imām Abū Dāwūd has also clarified that he has given preference to a

narrator with less links over a narrator who had better retention. Essentially, he gives precedence to a shorter chain even though the narrators of that chain may have a lesser degree of retention.

6. Another practice which can be understood from the same letter is that his purpose is to establish the chapter heading by means of one narration on the condition that the chapter heading is totally established through that single narration. If he mentions more than one *ḥadīth* in a chapter then this would be for a certain benefit. For example, if the second narration contains extra words which are not in the first narration. In summary, his purpose is not to gather a vast collection of narrations, but rather to establish the chapter heading for which one or two narrations are sufficient. On the contrary, Imām Nasa'ī and Imām Muslim mention a single narration with multiple chains as this was their objective. Occasionally, they mention a single *ḥadīth* with ten or even more chains of narration.
7. Another habit which Imām Abū Dāwūd himself mentioned in the letter was that he sometimes condenses long narrations, mentioning only the portion that is pertinent to the chapter. In mentioning the entire narration, the purpose is sometimes lost on the reader as it is difficult to ascertain which portion of the narration was actually intended.
8. As Imām Abū Dāwūd himself stated, a feature of his book is that he selected four thousand eight-hundred *aḥādīth* for his book from a collection of five hundred thousand. It is famous regarding *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that Imām Muslim selected his narrations from only three hundred thousand.
9. Another feature of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* is that it was the first of its kind to be compiled. The compilations prior to *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* were of the *Jawāmi'* and *Masānīd* categories.¹
10. A further feature of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* is that no book regarding the

¹ In *Ar-Risālah al-Mustaṭrafah li Bayān Mash'hūr Kutub as-Sunnah al-Musharrafah*, p. 11, as-Sayyid Muḥammad ibn Ja'far al-Kattānī has challenged this common perception that *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* was the first *Sunan* to be authored. In his opinion, *Sunan al-Imām ash-Shāfi'* was the first in this genre.

aḥādīth of *aḥkām* as comprehensive as *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* was compiled before it. The vast collection of *aḥādīth* pertaining to *fiqh* cannot be found in any other book. Scholars like Ibn al-'A'rābī and Imām Ghazālī have stated that in the field of *ḥadīth*, this book is sufficient for the *mujtahid*.

11. Abū 'l-'Alā' mentions that he saw the Prophet ﷺ in a dream saying:
"من أراد أن يتمسك بالسنة فليقرأ سنن أبي داود."

That Which Imām Abū Dāwūd has Remained Silent Upon

This subject under discussion is also from the distinguishing features of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, and also a matter of controversy amongst scholars. The summary is that Imām Abū Dāwūd often mentions the variations of narrators in the chain following a narration. Also, if the narration can be corroborated, he will mention that too, from which the reader can understand that he is giving preference to one over the other. He adopts a methodology by which those acquainted with the science of *ḥadīth* can ascertain the level and degree of any *ḥadīth*. Occasionally, he explicitly gives preference to one chain over another, or at least gives an indication.

However, in many instances, Imām Abū Dāwūd remains absolutely silent after narrating a *ḥadīth*. He does not mention any differences or variations. The question arises, what is the rank of these narrations where Imām Abū Dāwūd has remained silent? Imām Abū Dāwūd writes in his letter addressing the people of Makkah:¹

"ما لم أذكر شيئاً فيه فهو صالح."

Imām Abū Dāwūd explains that any narration regarding which he does not say anything, should be considered fit to be used as evidence. However, there is a difference of opinion amongst the *muḥaddithūn* in their approach towards these narrations.

¹ This treatise of Imām Abū Dāwūd has been published with some editions of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* and is worthy of being studied. It has also separately been published in Egypt with the research of 'Allāmah Zāhid al-Kawtharī. MA

This treatise was again published with the footnotes of Shaykh 'Abd al-Fattāh Abū Ghuddah and 'Allāmah Zāhid al-Kawtharī and is available as *Thalāth Rasā'il fī 'Ilm Muṣṭalah 'l-Ḥadīth*.

1. Ibn Mandah and Ibn as-Sakan are of the opinion that any narration that Imām Abū Dāwūd has not commented upon will undoubtedly be a proof and it is *ṣaḥīḥ*.
2. Imām Nawawī and Ibn as-Ṣalāḥ are of the opinion that such a narration will be *ḥasan* and fit to be used as a proof if there is no apparent weakness visible.
3. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar says that a *shāhid* should be sought for this narration to strengthen and support it. If a *shāhid* is found, it may be used as a proof. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar mentions the reason for this opinion is that Imām Abū Dāwūd also mentioned in his letter:

"وما فيه وهن شديد يئته."

He will clarify when there is extreme weakness in a narration. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar says that we understand from this statement that where there is weakness to a lesser degree, Imām Abū Dāwūd does not clarify it and remains silent. When this is the case, how can we unconditionally take those narrations to be a proof where Imām Abū Dāwūd has remained silent? He further says that we occasionally see a weak narrator like 'Abdullāh ibn Lahī'ah or Ṣāliḥ Mawlā 't-Taw'amah etc. in the chain of a narration, but Imām Abū Dāwūd does not make any comment. We can also observe that Imām Abū Dāwūd will comment on a narration due to a weak narrator in one place, and in another location where a narration of the same narrator appears, he remains silent relying on his previous caution. However, the reader perceives that Imām Abū Dāwūd is remaining silent. In summary, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar says that these factors dictate that we rule to abstain from narrations where Imām Abū Dāwūd has remained silent until and unless we find a corroborating narration that can support and strengthen it, in which case we will use it as a proof.

4. A fourth course of action that I have heard from my teachers is that when we see Imām Abū Dāwūd remaining silent, we should look to Ḥāfiẓ Mundhirī. If we find that he also has not commented, then we will take that narration as a proof. Thus, we sometimes see that Imām Abū Dāwūd does not make a comment, but Ḥāfiẓ Mundhirī makes a statement. Ḥāfiẓ Mundhirī is Ḥāfiẓ Zakī Ad-Dīn al-Mundhirī, the author of the famous *ḥadīth* book, *At-Targhīb wa 't-Tarhīb*. He has a very clear vision and

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critiquing eye in the field of *ḥadīth*. He has an abridged *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*.

Are there any Thulāthī Narrations in Sunan Abī Dāwūd?

‘Allāmah Sakhāwī has mentioned in *Fath al-Mughīth* that there is one *thulāthī* narration in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. This is the narration regarding the river of *Kawthar* in Jannah which has been narrated by Abū Barzah al-Aslamī رضي الله عنه. The narration mentions that the Emir of Kufa, ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād summoned Abū Barzah al-Aslamī رضي الله عنه to his court. He went to the Emir, and the Emir explained that he had summoned him to ask if he had heard anything from the Prophet ﷺ regarding the river of *Kawthar*. Imām Abū Dāwūd has narrated this *ḥadīth* towards the end of the book in a chapter titled باب في الحوض. ‘Allāmah Sakhāwī mentions regarding this *ḥadīth* that it is *thulāthī* with respect to its chain. However, this was an oversight on his part. At the first glance, it seems as if the narration is *thulāthī*, but upon further investigation it becomes apparent that this narration is not *thulāthī* but rather *rubā’ī*. We can however call it *rubā’ī* in the ruling of *thulāthī* as one *tābi’ī* has narrated it from another. Thus, we have two narrators of the same rank, and due to the unison of rank, we consider them to be one. In this way, this *ḥadīth* will be a *thulāthī* narration.

Some people have labelled this narration as *Ḥadīth ad-Daḥḍāḥ*. The words *daḥḍāḥ* and *daḥḍāḥ* mean stocky. The companion who narrated this *ḥadīth*, Abū Barzah al-Aslamī رضي الله عنه was stocky. When ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād saw him, he mockingly said ‘*Daḥḍāḥ*’. Abū Barzah al-Aslamī رضي الله عنه expressed his annoyance at this.

The Presence of Thulāthiyyāt in the Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah

A *thulāthī* narration is one in which there are only three narrators between the author of the book and the Prophet ﷺ. If there are only two, the narration would be called *thunā’ī*. There are no *thunā’ī* narrations in the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*. There are however some *thunā’ī* narrations in *Muwatta’ Mālik*. From the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*, there are *thulāthiyyāt* in some and not in others. There is one *thulāthī* narration in *Jāmi’ at-Tirmidhī*, which can be found in *Kitāb al-*

Fitan. The narrator of this *ḥadīth* is Anas ibn Mālik. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ الصَّابِرُ فِيهِمْ عَلَى دِينِهِ كَالْقَابِضِ عَلَى الْجَمْرِ."

There are five *thulāthī* narrations in *Sunan Ibn Mājah*. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* has the highest number of *thulāthī* narrations which total twenty-two. There are no *thulāthī* narrations in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and *Sunan an-Nasa’ī*. The highest chain of narration in these two books is *rubā’ī*, which can be found abundantly in the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*.

Having a minimal number of links in a chain of narration is called *‘uluww al-isnād* in the terminology of the *muḥaddithūn*. The chain that has a minimal number of links is known as *sanad ‘ālin*. In comparison to this would be *sanad sāfil* or *sanad nāzil*. In respect to the number of narrators in a chain, the lowest degree of narration in the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* is *‘ushārī*. This is when there are ten intermediaries between the author of the book and the Prophet ﷺ. There is one *‘ushārī* narration in both *Jāmi’ at-Tirmidhī* and *Sunan an-Nasa’ī*.

The Narrations Criticised by Ibn al-Jawzī

Scholars have criticised Ibn al-Jawzī due to his extremely harsh stance regarding some narrations. There have been books written on this topic. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar has written a book called *Al-Qawl al-Musaddad fi ‘dh-Dhabb ‘an Musnad Aḥmad*. In this book, he has excluded twenty-four narrations of *Musnad Aḥmad* which Ibn al-Jawzī deemed as fabricated. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar says that the strange thing is that one of these narrations can also be found in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Imām Suyūṭī has written a book titled *Al-Qawl al-Ḥasan fi ‘dh-Dhabb ‘an ‘s-Sunan*. In this book, he has excluded more than one hundred and twenty narrations, from which one narration is from Ḥammād ibn Shākir’s transmission of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and another is from *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Shaykh Zakariyyā has mentioned in the introduction to *Lāmi’ ad-Darārī* that Imām Suyūṭī has another book titled *At-Ta’aqqubāt alā ‘l-Mawḍū’āt*, in which he excludes three hundred *aḥādīth* from Ibn al-Jawzī’s grading. One narration is from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, one from *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, thirty-eight narrations of *Musnad Aḥmad*, nine narrations of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ten narrations of *Sunan an-Nasa’ī*, thirty from *Jāmi’ at-Tirmidhī*, thirty from *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, and sixty from *Mustadrak Ḥākim*. He has established that

none of these narrations are fabricated. The nine narrations of *Sunan Abi Dāwūd* that Ibn al-Jawzī deemed as fabricated¹ are as follows:

١. حديث صلاة التسبيح
٢. حديث أبي بن عمار في عدم توقيت المسح
٣. حديث معاذ بن جبل في جمع التقديم في السفر
٤. حديث: للسائل حق وإن جاء على فرس
٥. حديث: لا تمنع يد لأمس، أخرجه المصنف في كتاب النكاح
٦. حديث: من سئل عن علم فكتمه ألجم بلجام من نار
٧. حديث: لا تقطعوا اللحم بالسكين
٨. حديث: القدرية مجوس هذه الأمة
٩. حديث: المؤمن غر كريم والمنافق خب لئيم

Imām Suyūṭī has given an answer for some of these narrations in *Al-Qawl al-Ḥasan fī 'dh-Dhabb 'an 's-Sunan* and for others in *At-Ta'aqqubāt alā 'l-Mawḍū'āt*. He has established that these narrations are not fabricated. The reality is that, if Allah wills, there are no fabricated narrations in any of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* besides *Sunan Ibn Mājah*. I have expounded on this in the introduction to *Al-Fayḍ as-Samā'ī*.

Imām Abū Dāwūd's Conditions

It is important for the student of *ḥadīth* to know the conditions of the *a'immaḥ*. You will repeatedly see in the commentaries of *ḥadīth* that a particular narration did not meet the conditions of Imām Bukhārī, or the conditions of another Imām, so they did not narrate it in their respective books. We learn from this that every Imām had their own conditions for

¹ Ibn al-Jawzī did not specify that specific narrations in *Sunan Abi Dāwūd* are fabricated and specific narrations in *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī* are fabricated etc. He compiled a large book in which he gathered those narrations which were *mawḍū'* according to his research and findings. However, as his extremely harsh stance is famous among scholars, some *muḥaddithūn* analysed his book with the intention of seeing if any *aḥādīth* from the *Ṣiḥāḥ* had been included. Thus, they came across nine narrations of *Sunan Abi Dāwūd*. MA

mentioning a *ḥadīth* in their works, and they would only narrate those *aḥādīth* that would fully meet those conditions. Shaykh Zakariyyā has mentioned in the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī* that many books have been written regarding the conditions of the *muḥaddithūn*. Ḥāzimī has a book called *Shurūṭ al-A'immaḥ al-Khamsah*, upon which there are footnotes of 'Allāmah Zāhid al-Kawtharī. Ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī also has a book called *Shurūṭ al-A'immaḥ as-Sittah*.¹ Abū 'Abdillāh ibn Mandah who was a fourth century scholar was the first to write on this topic. Nevertheless, we need to know the conditions of Imām Abū Dāwūd, in light of which he compiled his book.

In this regard, I found something very concise yet comprehensive in *Ma'ārif as-Sunan* which the author has quoted from 'Allāmah Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī. He has very briefly mentioned the conditions of the authors of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*. We will mention these, from which we will come to learn the conditions of Imām Abū Dāwūd. However, before mentioning those conditions, it is important to know that scholars have explained that the authors of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* have not mentioned anywhere that these are the conditions for their respective books. The *muḥaddithūn* have closely studied the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* and the methodologies of their respective authors in regards to accepting narrations and which ranking of *aḥādīth* they have accepted, and thereafter extrapolated from their findings the conditions of each of the Imāms for accepting narrations.

We will now mention the conditions that Mawlānā Yūsuf Binnūrī has quoted from 'Allāmah Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī in *Ma'ārif as-Sunan*.

Imām Bukhārī's conditions are *Itqān* and *Kathrah Mulāzamah ar-Rāwī li 'sh-Shaykh*. Imām Bukhārī will accept the narration of any narrator who meets two conditions. The first is *Itqān*, which means that the narrator should have an impeccable level of retention. The second quality is that the narrator should have an elongated period of company with the person from whom he narrates.

¹ The treatises of Ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī and Ḥāzimī have been published along with the letter of Imām Abū Dāwūd addressing the people of Makkah, with the footnotes of Shaykh 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah and 'Allāmah Zāhid al-Kawtharī, and are available as *Thalāth Rasā'il fī 'Ilm Muṣṭalah 'l-Ḥadīth*.

Imām Muslim only stipulates *Itqān*. *Mulāzamah* is not a condition according to him. A mere possibility of a meeting or being contemporaries will suffice.

Imām Abū Dāwūd and Imām Nasa'ī stipulate *Kathrat al-Mulāzamah* and not *Itqān*.

Imām Tirmidhī stipulates neither.¹

The author of *Al-Manhal al-Adhb al-Mawrūd* quotes from Ibn Mandah that Imām Abū Dāwūd's condition is to accept the narration of any narrator who has not been unanimously rejected. There should also not be any interruption or discontinuance in the chain, i.e., the *ḥadīth* should be *muttaṣil as-sanad*.

The Transmissions of Sunan Abī Dāwūd

There are various transmissions of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*. The question arises, how did these various transmissions come about? In this day and age, the method of studying *ḥadīth* is that the student sits with the book in front of them, and studies it with the teacher. During the time when these books were authored, printing presses did not exist and thus, there were no printed books to study from. The student would go to the teacher and express their intention to study and listen to their narrations. The teacher would dictate those narrations to the students, either from memory or from their book. The objective of the student was to gather the narrations and their chains, which they had not previously acquired. This is not the situation today. Before even studying with the teacher, the student already has the collection of *aḥādīth* in printed format in front of them. When we have understood that the students would listen to their teachers and write, it is evident that that the students were numerous and studied with the teacher during different eras. Every time the teacher narrated his compilation, there would be a slight discrepancy; sometimes more and sometimes less was dictated. This is the same as when you students transcribe your teachers lecture notes. It is not necessary that the teacher gives the same lecture every year, but sometimes he may say more and sometimes less. Similarly, there were

¹ *Ma'ārif as-Sunan*, 1:20.

discrepancies in the number of narrations dictated each time.

In this way, there are numerous transmissions of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. Of these transmissions, three transmissions from three students of Imām Abū Dāwūd are more prominent. Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī has mentioned them in the introduction to *Badhl al-Majhūd*.

1. One transmission is that of Abū 'Alī al-Lu'lu'ī. His full name is Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Amr al-Baṣrī. (d. 333 AH). Lu'lu'ī comes from the word *lu'lu'* and is an ascription to the buying and selling of pearls. He possibly used to trade in pearls. This transmission is widespread in the east. He narrated the *Sunan* from Imām Abū Dāwūd in 275 AH, and this was the last dictation of the *Sunan* as Imām Abū Dāwūd passed away in the same year. It is for this reason this transmission is deemed to be the most authentic.
2. The second transmission is of Ibn Dāsah. His full name is Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn 'Abd ar-Razzāq ibn Dāsah at-Tammār al-Baṣrī. This transmission is widespread in the Maghrib region. The famous commentator of *ḥadīth*, Imām Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī, who also wrote a commentary on *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, studied *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* with Ibn Dāsah. After studying it, he wrote a commentary on that very transmission, which is known as *Ma'ālim as-Sunan*. The difference between Lu'lu'ī's and Ibn Dāsah's transmissions is only of a structural nature and not of omission.
3. The third transmission is of Abū 'Īsā ar-Ramlī. His full name is Abū 'Īsā Ishāq ibn Mūsā ar-Ramlī. This transmission is very similar to that of Ibn Dāsah.
4. The fourth is the transmission of Ibn al-'A'rābī. His name is Abū Sa'īd Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (d. 304 AH). He is commonly known by his patronym Ibn al-'A'rābī.¹ This transmission is deficient. It does not contain *Kitāb al-Fitan*, *Kitāb al-Malāḥim*, *Kitāb al-Ḥurūf*, and half of *Kitāb al-Libās*.

¹ This Ibn al-'A'rābī is other than the famous linguist Ibn al-'A'rābī. The latter is Muḥammad ibn Ziyād (d. 231 AH) and he preceded Ibn al-'A'rābī, the transmitter of the *Sunan*. (Mawlānā Sa'īd Pālanpūrī) MA

5. The fifth transmission is that of Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-'Abd al-Anṣārī. There are some observations on certain narrators and chains of narration in this transmission which are not found in the other transmissions.¹

Commentaries² and Marginal Glosses

Shaykh Zakariyyā has listed over twenty commentaries of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* in the introduction to *Badhl al-Majhūd*. Five of these are famous and complete, and majority of them have been published.

1. *Ma'ālim as-Sunan* - This is the work of Imām Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 388 AH). His commentary is based upon the transmission of Ibn Dāsah, and it is complete, comprehensive and concise. I had a feeling that this was the earliest commentary on *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, which was later confirmed when I saw it mentioned in *Fayḍ al-Bārī*.
2. There is a commentary that has been written by Shihāb ad-Dīn ibn Raslān, who is the student of Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar. This commentary is commonly known as *Sharḥ Ibn Raslān*. I have heard that this commentary

¹ Imām Sakhāwī has made mention of eleven transmissions in his book *Badhl al-Majhūd fī Khatm as-Sunan li Abī Dāwūd*. Many previous editions of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* included the differences of the transmissions in the margins, like the five volume first Indian edition of *Badhl al-Majhūd fī Halli Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, the four volume Indian edition of *'Awn al-Ma'būd Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, and the Shaykh al-Hind corrections edition of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. They relied mainly on the research of the Yemeni scholar, Shaykh Ḥusayn ibn Muḥsin al-Anṣārī, who was the teacher of Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khan. On his return to India, Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khan brought back with him many manuscripts of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*, which the aforementioned authors used to mark the differences in the transmissions.

² There are three types of commentary:

- i. *Ash-Sharḥ al-Mamzūj* - The interwoven commentary. This is where the original text is incorporated into the commentary, and reads like a single book.
- ii. *Ash-Sharḥ al-Mawḍū'ī* - The thematic commentary. This is where the commentator arranges the commentary according to the subject matter. He firstly mentions a passage of the original text, and then goes on to elaborate on that passage.
- iii. *Ash-Sharḥ al-Mawḍū'ī* - The sporadic commentary. This is where the commentator selects only certain words or sentences of the original text, and comments on them. This type of commentary does not encompass the entire text, but only certain places from within the text.

is very detailed and consists of eight volumes. However, a complete set is not available and some people possess odd volumes. Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī had two volumes copied in Ḥijāz, and he brought them back with him. These are now in the library of Maẓāhir 'Ulūm. Shaykh Zakariyyā would excessively praise this commentary, and he has extensively quoted from the available volumes in his works.¹

3. *Mirqāt aṣ-Ṣu'ūd ilā Sunan Abī Dāwūd* - This is the work of Imām Suyūṭī (d. 911 AH). 'Alī ibn Sulaymān ad-Dimintī abridged this commentary and named the abridged version *Darajāt Mirqāt aṣ-Ṣu'ūd ilā Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. Where we see Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī saying in *Badhl al-Majhūd*, "كذا في الشرح", he intends this commentary.
4. *Al-Mukhtaṣar li 'l-Mundhirī* - The author named this book *Al-Mujtabā*. We have already discussed Ḥāfiẓ Zakī ad-Dīn al-Mundhirī and his book previously.
5. *Tahdhīb as-Sunan* - This is the work of 'Allāmah Ibn Qayyim. In this commentary, Ibn Qayyim has not commented on every *ḥadīth*, but rather, on selected chapters. In some places, he has written in great detail.

These five commentaries are old and famous. There are another three which we can call recent commentaries.

1. *'Awn al-Ma'būd Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd* - This is a commentary of the Ahle Ḥadīth scholar Muḥammad Ashraf Aẓīm Ābādī. This is a complete commentary and it has been published in India in four large volumes. There are many useful discussions on *ḥadīth* in this commentary, but the author errs in many places while trying to explain the book or while explaining the statement قال أبو داود. Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī mentions many of these places in *Badhl al-Majhūd*. Due to the fact that he was a *ghayr-muqallid*, he has also defamed and spoken of many *a'immaḥ* in a derogatory way, especially the *Aḥnāf*. Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī was not pleased with him, and mentions this in the

¹ This commentary was published in its entirety in 2016 by Dār al-Falāḥ, and was edited under the supervision of Khālid ar-Rabāṭ.

introduction to *Badhl al-Majhūd*. He further says that he does not quote anything from this book in his commentary until he does not refer back to the original source where it was quoted from.¹

2. *Badhl al-Majhūd fī Halli Sunan Abī Dāwūd* - This commentary is not in need of any introduction. This is an interwoven commentary in five large volumes. There is no better commentary of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* in terms of explanation of the book and explanation of *قال أبو داود*. Towards the end of his life, Shaykh Zakariyyā had this published in Cairo in twenty volumes with his footnotes. Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī spent approximately ten years compiling this commentary. Shaykh Zakariyyā had an important role in its compilation. Shaykh Zakariyyā mentions that Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī wrote in the introduction to *Badhl al-Majhūd* praising his assistance:

"هو جدير بأن ينسب إليه هذا الشرح."

Shaykh Zakariyyā mentions that he erased these words from the manuscript. When Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī saw that he had erased it, he asked him what he had done. Shaykh Zakariyyā replied that these words were an insult to *Badhl al-Majhūd*. Thereafter, Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī wrote:

"وأعاني عليه بعض أجبائي خصوصاً منهم عزيزي وقره عيني وقلبي الحاج الحافظ المولوي محمد زكريا بن مولانا الحاج الحافظ المولوي محمد يحيى الكاندهلوي رحمه الله تعالى."

There are very useful footnotes of Shaykh Zakariyyā on *Badhl al-Majhūd*. Many of these footnotes have been published with the Cairo edition. I have benefitted from the footnotes as well as *Badhl al-Majhūd*.

3. *Al-Manhal al-'Adhb al-Mawrūd Sharḥ Sunan al-Imām Abī Dāwūd* - This is the work of Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad ibn Khaṭṭāb as-Subkī, who was a

¹ Although Mawlānā 'Aqil attributes this commentary to Muḥammad Ashraf Azīm Ābādī, and many others attribute it to Shams al-Ḥaqq Azīm Ābādī, this is actually the work of a group of scholars carried out under the supervision of Shams al-Ḥaqq Azīm Ābādī. From them were Muḥammad Ashraf Azīm Ābādī and the author of *Tuḥfah al-Aḥwadhī*, Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Mubārakpūrī. See: *Ad-Da'wah ilā Allah fī Aqṭar Mukhtalifah* p. 176 by Shaykh Taqī ad-Dīn al-Hilālī. Shams al-Ḥaqq Azīm Ābādī has another commentary on the *Sunan* titled *Ghāyah al-Maqṣūd*. He passed away in 1329/1911 at the age of 53.

great Mālikī scholar of Al-Azhar. He was unable to complete this commentary, as he passed away before its completion. This commentary is easily available in Arab countries. His methodology is similar to the methodology applied by 'Allāmah 'Aynī in his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.¹

There are a few marginal glosses on *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* which are particularly popular.

1. *Faṭḥ al-Wadūd* - This is the marginal gloss of Abū 'l-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Hādī as-Sindhī (d. 1139 AH). He was a Ḥanafī scholar, and like Imām Suyūṭī, he also has a gloss on each of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*.
2. *At-Ta'liq al-Maḥmūd* - This is the gloss of Mawlānā Fakhr al-Ḥasan Gangohī, who was a student of Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī.
3. *Anwār al-Maḥmūd 'alā Sunan Abī Dāwūd* - This is a combination of the lecture notes of Shaykh al-Hind, Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī, Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī, 'Allāmah Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī, and Mawlānā Shabbīr Aḥmad 'Uthmānī.

Many others began to write commentaries on *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, but were not completed. Imām Nawawī began to write a commentary², and 'Allāmah 'Aynī also began to write a commentary³ which he has quoted in his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Umdah al-Qārī*. Similarly, Ḥāfiẓ al-'Irāqī wrote a commentary until *باب سجود السهو* in seven volumes. It has been said that if this commentary was completed, it would have reached forty volumes.⁴

¹ This commentary was continued by the son of the author, Amīn Maḥmūd Khaṭṭāb, and this supplement was published by the name *Faṭḥ al-Malik al-Ma'būd Takmilah Al-Manhal al-'Adhb al-Mawrūd Sharḥ Sunan al-Imām Abī Dāwūd*. He also passed away before completing it. The grandson of Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad ibn Khaṭṭāb as-Subkī, 'Abd al-'Azīm Ḥamid Khaṭṭāb has added to this commentary, but it is yet to be completed.

² This commentary is titled *Al-'Ijāz fī Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd as-Sijistānī*. It was published by Ad-Dār al-Athariyyah, Amman in 2007, critically edited by Shaykh Mash'hūr ibn Ḥasan Āl Salmān and again recently by Al-Fārūq al-Ḥadīthah li 'ṭ-Ṭibā'ah wa 'n-Nashr, Cairo.

³ This commentary covers until the end of *Kitāb az-Zakāh*, and was published in 1999 in seven volumes by Maktabah ar-Rushd, Riyadh by the name of *Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*.

⁴ For a more exhaustive list, refer to *Jāmi' ash-Shurūḥ wa 'l-Ḥawāshī*.

Etiquettes of the Student

It was the practice of Shaykh Zakariyyā to mention ten etiquettes of the student before starting a book. He mentioned this to us while I was studying before we started *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. I generally mention these ten etiquettes as well.

1. Sincerity of intention.
2. Ensuring attendance in lectures. I took great care of my attendance during my student days. I do not recall ever missing a lesson on *Sharḥ al-Jāmī*, let alone a lecture of *ḥadīth*. I do not even recall ever taking an authorised absence. There is a great loss to learning in being absent, and it is also a cause of decrease in blessings.
3. Punctuality and sitting in an orderly manner. Students should arrive to the lecture punctually, and sit in rows in an orderly manner.
4. Sitting in a respectful position. To sit in the *tashahhud* position as long as possible, and to abstain from sitting cross-legged.¹
5. Abstaining from sleeping during the lecture. To listen attentively to the lecture, without letting the lecture pass in negligence.
6. Not leaning on books.
7. To abstain from laughing at certain words that come in *Kitāb al-Hudūd* when translated, and to listen with decorum. It was the habit of Shaykh Zakariyyā to literally translate some obscene and indecent words that are mentioned in a *ḥadīth* in *Kitāb al-Hudūd*. He would clarify that it was an obscene word in the Arabic language, and when the Prophet ﷺ was able to utter it at a time of necessity for the sake of a particular interest, then what status do we possess? Thus, when the word *أُنْكَبَا* would come in *Kitāb al-Hudūd*, or when the statement of Abū Bakr *امص بظر اللات* would pass in the incident of the treaty of *Hudaybiyyah* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Shaykh Zakariyyā would translate them literally into the Urdu language.

¹ This is the general etiquette. However, if circumstances necessitate, there is no harm in sitting cross-legged, as long as one remains respectful in their posture. For a more detailed discussion on the etiquettes of a student, refer to *Tadhkirah as-Sāmi' wa 'l-Mutakallim*.

8. Showing due respect for all the *a'immaḥ*. It should not be that if a *ḥadīth* is read which is contrary to the view of a certain Imām, we develop disrespect and ill-thoughts regarding that Imām. Shaykh Zakariyyā would mention an incident which took place in the lecture of Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī. On one occasion, Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī very beautifully explained and gave an answer to a *ḥadīth* that was apparently against the *Ḥanafī* position. One student remarked that if Imām Shāfi'ī was alive to hear this explanation, he would retract from his opinion. Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī replied, "Astaghfirullāh! If Imām Shāfi'ī was alive, this explanation of mine would have been no more than mere speculation, which Imām Shāfi'ī would have dispelled with an answer. Now because the *a'immaḥ mujtahidīn* are no longer with us, and we only have their view and opinions in front of us, we find the view of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah to be in greater conformity to the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*, and therefore, we advocate his view. If for arguments sake, any of the *a'immaḥ mujtahidīn* were to be alive today, there would be no other way than to follow them."
9. Veneration for knowledge and scholars. A student should outwardly and inwardly revere their teachers. Disrespect towards a teacher is a major cause of deprivation from knowledge. One should also respect all those things which are connected to knowledge, or aid in one's pursuit of knowledge. This would include a classmate, a book, a piece of paper, a pen, a desk and even the classroom.
10. Being presentable. A student should make every effort to look presentable in their outer appearance and also their dressing, whilst also being in conformity to the *Sharī'ah* and *Sunnah*. The type of dressing mentioned in the *ḥadīth* should be adopted, and where there is no mention in the *ḥadīth*, the pious people of the time should be emulated. Allah says in the Qur'ān:

﴿وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ﴾ (لقمان: ١٥)

Categories of Ḥadīth Compilations

Shaykh Zakariyyā would mention that up until the time he taught *Mishkāṭ*

al-Maṣābiḥ, he only came across ten or twelve categories of *ḥadīth* compilations. As his research and pre-occupation with *ḥadīth* developed, he came across many more categories. Thus, by the time he wrote the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī*, he had learned of more than twenty-five categories. Shaykh Zakariyyā mentioned this in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* lecture.

Shaykh Zakariyyā has listed twenty-seven categories of *ḥadīth* compilations with examples of each in the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī*. Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī has briefly mentioned ten categories in the introduction to *Badhl al-Majhūd*. Keeping in front of me the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī* and the introduction to *Badhl al-Majhūd*, I have listed in detail in the introduction to *Al-Fayḍ as-Samā'ī* close to twenty-five categories, together with their meanings, explanations and examples. I advise you to refer back to that. We should at least acquaint ourselves with the names of the books that the *muḥaddithūn* spent their lives compiling, and ponder over how they strove to serve and preserve the prophetic traditions. It would be a great privilege if Allah was to count us amongst the servants of the *ḥadīth*. Nevertheless, some categories of *ḥadīth* compilations are as follows:

1. *Jāmi'* - *Aḥādīth* are of eight topics, and the book in which all eight can be found will be classed as a *Jāmi'*.¹ The eight topics are:
 1. *'Aqā'id* - Beliefs
 2. *Aḥkām* - Rulings
 3. *Tafsīr* - Exegesis
 4. *Tārīkh* - History
 5. *Riqāq* - Heart-softeners
 6. *Manāqib* - Virtues
 7. *Ādāb* - Etiquettes
 8. *Fitan* - Trials
2. *Sunan* - *Sunan* is the name given to that type of *ḥadīth* book in which

¹ Mawlānā Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Chishtī has challenged this concept in his book *Fawā'id-e-Jāmi'ah bar 'Ujālā-e-Nāfi'ah*. He says that this definition of a *Jāmi'* cannot be found in the books of earlier scholars, and is either Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz's own definition, or something he has quoted from his teachers. Mawlānā Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥalīm cites many examples where books that did not contain all of the eight mentioned topics were still referred to as *Jāmi'* by earlier scholars. See: *Fawā'id-e-Jāmi'ah bar 'Ujālā-e-Nāfi'ah*, pp. 154-158.

aḥādīth are gathered in chapters and structured according to the chapters of *fiqh*.

3. *Musnad* - *Musnad* is that type of compilation in which *aḥādīth* are gathered in order of the names of the companions. Consideration is not given to the subject matter of the *aḥādīth*. The name of a companion is made into a chapter heading, and all the narrations from this companion will be listed in that chapter, immaterial of the subject matter.

Some *muḥaddithūn* have structured their compilations alphabetically. Thus, the companions whose name begin with *alif* will be listed first. Thereafter, those companions whose name begin with *bā'*, and so on.

Some *muḥaddithūn* have taken into consideration the ranks of the companions, and structured their compilations accordingly. In this instance, the book will begin with the narrations of the four rightly guided caliphs. *Musnad Aḥmad* and *Musnad Abī Dāwūd at-Tayālīsī* are structured according to the ranks of the companions.

Other *muḥaddithūn* have taken tribes into consideration, and in this instance, the book will begin with narrations of companions from Banū Hāshim, and thereafter, in order of proximity.

Sometimes, the *Musnad* will only have narrations of one companion. For example, *Musnad Abī Bakr*. Or it may have the narrations of a select group of companions, e.g., *Musnad al-Arba'ah*, which contains the narrations of the four rightly guided caliphs, and *Musnad al-Asharah*, which contains the narrations of the ten companions who bore glad tidings of Jannah.

4. *Mashyakhah* - The compilation of *ḥadīth* in which narrations are compiled in order of the authors teachers, or the narrations of a single teacher are gathered. For example, Isma'īlī gathered the narrations of Al-'A'mash, and Imām Nasa'ī gathered the narrations of Fuḍayl ibn 'Iyād.
5. *Mu'jam* - Some have said that the *Mu'jam* is that collection in which *aḥādīth* are gathered in order of the authors teachers. Shaykh Zakariyyā has mentioned in the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī* that this is in fact the definition of *Mashyakhah*. *Mu'jam* is that compilation in which *aḥādīth* are gathered in alphabetical order, whether that order be in respect to the companions or the authors teachers. Thus, *Mu'jam* incorporates the

previous two categories. Ṭabarānī's *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* is compiled in order of the companions' names, and *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ* and *Al-Mu'jam aṣ-Ṣaghīr* are compiled in order of the authors teachers. They are all known as *Mu'jam*.

6. *At-Tartīb* - As the *Ma'ājim* and *Masānid* were not compiled in a thematic order, it is difficult to locate *aḥādīth* on a specific topic. The *muḥaddithūn* felt the need to structure these *Ma'ājim* and *Masānid* thematically. Thus, this new category called *At-Tartīb* came into existence, and many scholars served *ḥadīth* in this way too. *Musnad Aḥmad* has also been re-ordered in this way. Shaykh Zakariyyā has mentioned many examples in the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī*. My father has indexed the *aḥādīth* of *Al-Mu'jam aṣ-Ṣaghīr*.
7. *Al-Aṭrāf* - It is that collection of *aḥādīth* where only the opening portion of the *ḥadīth* is listed. Thereafter, a reference is given to the books in which this *ḥadīth* is mentioned, along with its chains of narration, or only a list of the books in which the *ḥadīth* can be found will be mentioned. In Ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī's *Aṭrāf al-Kutub as-Sittah*, a reference is given to where the *aḥādīth* may be found in the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*. Ḥāfiẓ Jamāl ad-Dīn al-Mizzī's *Tuḥfah al-Ashrāf* is of the first type. It is extremely useful that with minimal effort and time, one can know where a certain *ḥadīth* can be found, and the chains of its narration. If we were to do this on our own, a huge amount of time would be spent.
8. *Al-Mustadrak* - It is that compilation of *aḥādīth* which has been gathered while keeping another compilation into consideration, and all those *aḥādīth* are mentioned in it that should have been mentioned in the original compilation as they meet the conditions of the original author, but somehow never made it into the original author's compilation. Thus, if someone was to do an *istidrāk* of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, they would gather all those *aḥādīth* which in their opinion should have been mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* as these *aḥādīth* meet the conditions of Imām Bukhārī, but were not mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. This book would then be called *Mustadrak alā 'l-Bukhārī*.

Imām Ḥākim compiled a book of this type based on the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* called *Mustadrak alā 'ṣ-Ṣaḥīḥayn*. We learn from the above definition of *Al-*

Mustadrak that only those *aḥādīth* should be mentioned which are not in the original compilation. However, due to an oversight by Imām Ḥākim, he included *aḥādīth* in his *Mustadrak* which were already mentioned in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*. A further oversight by Imām Ḥākim which is famous is that he also included certain narrations which *muḥaddithūn* criticised, and they did not meet the conditions of the original authors; Imām Bukhārī and Imām Muslim. Due to this, some scholars have disproved him.¹

9. *Al-Mustakhraj* - That collection of *aḥādīth* in which the *takhrīj* of another collection is done. The author of the *Mustakhraj* will narrate in his book all the *aḥādīth* of the original collection in their order, but with his own chain of narration in which the original author is not mentioned, but both their chains meet at a higher stage. The benefit of this is that the *aḥādīth* are strengthened, and now two chains for the book have become available; one from the original book, and the other from the *Mustakhraj*. Ismā'īlī has a *Mustakhraj* on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Abū 'Awānah has a *Mustakhraj* on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and Abū Nu'aym has a *Mustakhraj* on the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*.
10. *Al-Afrād wa 'l-Gharā'ib* - It is that book of *aḥādīth* in which the solitary narrations of a particular teacher are mentioned, which cannot be found with any other students of that teacher. The narrations in this type of book will be categorised as *gharīb*. Imām Dāraqutnī's *Kitāb al-Afrād* is very famous and comprehensive. Imām Muslim also has a work in this genre.
11. *Gharīb al-Ḥadīth* - It is that type of book in which abstruse and obscure words found in the *aḥādīth* are explained, as it requires great responsibility to explain the meanings of *aḥādīth*. It has been narrated regarding Imām Aḥmad that when he was asked the meaning of specific words in the *ḥadīth*, he would say:

"سلوا أصحاب الغريب."

Similarly, Al-Aṣma'ī was asked regarding the meaning of the *ḥadīth*:

"الجار أحق بسقبة."

He replied:

¹ The reason for this is that Imām Ḥākim passed away before revising his work.

"أنا لا أفسر حديث رسول الله ﷺ ولكن العرب تزعم أن السقب اللزيق."

Some famous works in this genre are:

- *Kitāb al-Gharīb* of Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām
- *Al-Fā'iq* of Zamakhsharī
- *Kitāb al-Gharībayn* of Abū 'Ubayd al-Harawī
- *An-Nihāyah fī Gharīb 'l-Ḥadīth wa 'l-Athar* of Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī
- *Majma' Biḥār 'l-Anwār* of Shaykh Muḥammad Ṭāhir al-Pattanī

12. *Al-'Ilal* - Books within this genre detail and explain hidden defects [*'ilal*] within chains of narration. *'Ilal* is the plural of *'illah*, which in the terminology of the *muḥaddithūn* refers to subtle faults and defects with the *sanad*. Outwardly, a *ḥadīth* may have a very sound chain but in actual fact, it may contain a very subtle defect, which can only be noticed upon closer inspection by masters of the field. There are numerous works which have been authored on this subject.

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13. *Al-Arba'īnah* - Collections that are more commonly known as 'Forty Ḥadīth.' This practice of gathering forty *aḥādīth* started on the basis of a *ḥadīth* that has been narrated by Imām Bayhaqī in his *Shu'ab al-Imān*. The narrator of the *ḥadīth*, Abū 'd-Dardā' mentions that the Prophet ﷺ was asked regarding the minimum number of narrations a person would have to acquire to be considered a *faqīh*. The Prophet ﷺ replied:

"من حفظ على أمتي أربعين حديثاً في أمر دينها بعثه الله فقيهاً وكنتم له يوم القيامة شافعاً وشهيداً."

Even though this narration is regarded to be *ḍa'īf* through all its chains, many *muḥaddithūn* have compiled collections of forty *aḥādīth* in their eagerness to be recipients of such a great reward and virtue. Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī has compiled a very concise collection of forty *aḥādīth*. Shaykh Zakariyyā mentions that his father used to teach this

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14. *Ta'ālīq* - This type of collection is where only the text of the *aḥādīth* are mentioned, and the chains of narration are omitted like *Maṣābiḥ as-Sunnah* and *Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābiḥ*. Both of these books suffice on only the text of the *aḥādīth*. However, the name of the narrating companion is mentioned before the text, and a reference to the major *ḥadīth* collections is mentioned after the text in *Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābiḥ*. There are many compilations in this genre:

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"أنا لا أفسر حديث رسول الله ﷺ ولكن العرب تزعم أن السقب اللزيق."

Some famous works in this genre are:

- *Kitāb al-Gharīb* of Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām
- *Al-Fā'iḳ* of Zamakhsharī
- *Kitāb al-Gharībayn* of Abū 'Ubayd al-Harawī
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Muhaddith Shaykh 'Alī al-Muttaqī, is an arrangement of Imām Suyūṭī's *Jam' al-Jawāmi'*.

15. *Al-Musalsalāt* - That type of book in which only *aḥādīth musalsalah* are mentioned. *Al-Ḥadīth al-Musalsal* is that narration in which all or majority of the narrators of a chain are united in a certain characteristic, quality, or action. For example, *Al-Ḥadīth al-Musalsal bi 'l-Awwaliyyah* is that *ḥadīth* which the student hears from their teacher before all other *aḥādīth*. However, *muḥaddithūn* have stated that the continuity is not found in the entire chain. Similarly, *Al-Ḥadīth al-Musalsal bi 'l-Muṣāfahah* is that *ḥadīth* which the student hears from the teacher with a handshake. *Al-Ḥadīth al-Musalsal bi Qirā'ah Sūrat aṣ-Ṣaff* is that *ḥadīth* when the student hears it from the teacher, the teacher recites *Sūrat aṣ-Ṣaff* at the time of narrating. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar has mentioned that the most authentic of all the *aḥādīth musalsalah* is *Al-Ḥadīth al-Musalsal bi Qirā'ah Sūrat aṣ-Ṣaff*. Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī's book of *aḥādīth musalsalah*, *Al-Faḍl al-Mubīn fī 'l-Musalsal min Ḥadīth an-Nabī al-Amīn* is very well-known and it is taught in many madrasas. Shaykh Zakariyyā mentions that Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī was the first person to have this book published, in 1330 AH.
16. *Sharḥ al-Āthār* - This is one genre from the compilations of *ḥadīth*, and it is also known as *Ta'wīl al-Ḥadīth* or *Mukhtalaf al-Ḥadīth*.¹ This genre of books deals with consolidating apparently contradictory *aḥādīth*, or establishing precedence for one over another. This can only be done by one who possesses complete mastery of the sciences of *ḥadīth*, *fiqh*, and *uṣūl*. Some books in this genre are:
 - *Ikhtilāf al-Ḥadīth* of Imām Shāfi'ī
 - *Ta'wīl Mukhtalaf al-Ḥadīth* of Ibn Qutaybah ad-Dīnūrī
 - *Sharḥ Ma'ānī 'l-Āthār* of Imām Ṭaḥāwī
 - *Sharḥ Mushkil al-Āthār* of Imām Ṭaḥāwī
17. *Al-Adhkār* - There are some compilations which only contain *aḥādīth* of *ad'iyah* and *adhkār*. Many books have been written on this topic:
 - *'Amal al-Yawm wa 'l-Laylah* of Imām Nasa'ī

¹ Also, *Mushkil al-Ḥadīth*.

- *'Amal al-Yawm wa 'l-Laylah* of Ibn as-Sunnī
- *Kitāb al-Adhkār* of Imām Nawawī
- *Al-Ḥiṣn al-Ḥaṣīn* of Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Jazarī ash-Shāfi'ī
- *Al-Ḥizb al-'Aẓam* of Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī (Shaykh Zakariyyā has mentioned in the introduction to *Lāmi' ad-Darārī* that our *mashāyikh* and elders have given precedence to *Al-Ḥizb al-'Aẓam* over Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān al-Jazūlī's *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt*, as the latter contains some weak narrations).

I have briefly listed the main categories of *ḥadīth* compilations. Please refer to the introductions of *Lāmi' ad-Darārī* and *Al-Fayḍ as-Samā'ī* for a more exhaustive list with further details.¹

By the grace of Allah, we have until now covered the necessary discussions pertaining to *muqaddimat 'l-ilm* and *muqaddimat 'l-kitāb*. We have yet to mention our *isnād*. However, before mentioning our *isnād*, it is important to mention one last beneficial discussion which is related to our *isnād*, and that is *'ilm 'l-ḥadīth* in the Asian subcontinent.

'Ilm 'l-Ḥadīth in the Asian Subcontinent

The *asānīd* of the subcontinental *muḥaddithūn* all meet at Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī. Although attention was paid to *'ilm 'l-ḥadīth* in the Asian subcontinent throughout the ages as those who are acquainted with the history of *ḥadīth* have written, it was very minimal compared to the attention given in the Arab lands. Only Aṣ-Ṣaghānī's *Mashāriq al-Anwār* was initially taught. Thereafter, *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ* was also included in the syllabus.

In the middle of the 10th century, there was a decline in *'ilm 'l-ḥadīth* in the Arab lands. At the same time, Allah inspired the people of the Asian subcontinent with the acquisition and service to *'ilm 'l-ḥadīth*. In the 10th century, Allah chose Shaykh 'Alī al-Muttaqī Burhānpūrī (d. 975 AH), the author of *Kanz al-'Ummāl* for the service of *ḥadīth*. Thus, he acquired *'ilm 'l-*

¹ See also: *Ar-Risālah al-Mustaṭrafah li Bayān Mash'hūr Kutub as-Sunnah al-Musharrafah* by as-Sayyid ash-Sharīf Muḥammad ibn Ja'far al-Kattānī (d. 1345 AH).

ḥadīth from the scholars of *Hijāz*, and began propagating it upon his return to India. Thereafter, his students like Shaykh 'Abd al-Wahhāb Burhānpūrī (d. 1001 AH) and Shaykh Muḥammad Ṭāhir Pattānī (d. 976 AH) were divinely chosen for the service of *ḥadīth*. Shaykh Muḥammad Ṭāhir Pattānī's works in the field of *ḥadīth*, *Majma' Biḥār 'l-Anwār* which is considered to be a commentary of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah*, and *Tadhkirah al-Mawḍū'āt* are prominent.

In the 11th century came the era of Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith ad-Dihlawī (d. 1052 AH). He acquired 'ilm al-*ḥadīth* from the scholars of *Hijāz*, and upon returning to India, he made Delhi a center for its propagation. He also authored some great commentaries of *ḥadīth*. He wrote two commentaries on *Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābiḥ*; *Lama'at at-Tanqīḥ* in Arabic and *Ash'at al-Lama'at* in Persian. Many *muḥaddithūn* were born in his progeny who also authored commentaries of *ḥadīth*.

The 12th century saw the blessed era of Shaykh al-Mashāyikh Shāh Waliyullāh Aḥmad ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥīm ad-Dihlawī (d. 1176 AH). Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī went to *Hijāz* and acquired 'ilm al-*ḥadīth* from the scholars there, especially Shaykh Abū Ṭāhir al-Madanī. Upon returning to India, he occupied himself in religious duties, especially in 'ilm al-*ḥadīth*. It is from the time of Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī that the teaching and learning of the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* was initiated in the Asian subcontinent.

During the 13th century, Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī's students and offspring continued his legacy, from whom Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 1239 AH) proved to be a worthy successor to his great father. Thereafter, from his students was his grandson Shāh Muḥammad Ishāq (d. 1262 AH). Among his students was Shāh 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Mujaddidī (d. 1296 AH), from whose lectures of *ḥadīth* a large group of *muḥaddithūn* was prepared in the Asian subcontinent and *Hijāz*. From his students was Mawlānā Qāsim Nānotawī (d. 1297 AH).

Lastly, the 14th century saw the likes of Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī (d. 1323 AH). He singlehandedly taught the entire *dawrat al-ḥadīth* syllabus¹ for many decades. Thereafter, his students spread out and served *ḥadīth* in places like Dārul 'Ulūm Deoband and Mazāhir 'Ulūm, Saharanpur. From his

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Isnād - A Speciality of this Ummah

Scholars have written that *isnād*, i.e., the formal recording of chains from transmitter to transmitter from the beginning to end, in such a way that in every era, every narrator can link every narration back to the Prophet ﷺ, is a speciality of this *ummah*. The previous nations were not granted this blessing. Imām Suyūṭī mentions that even though intermittent chains with dropped portions could be found with many Jews, they are unable to link it to the very end, i.e., Mūsā ؑ. There are many missing links between them and Mūsā ؑ which they are unable to fill. He writes:

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Similarly, he writes regarding the Christians that they are unable to trace their traditions beyond Simeon and Paul. It is solely the speciality of this *ummah* that they transmitted every saying, action and condition of their prophet extremely cautiously with an uninterrupted chain of transmission. Imām Muslim has narrated the saying of 'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak in the *Muqaddimah* of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*:

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The Necessity of Mentioning Isnād

It is apparent that a *ḥadīth*, whether *marfū'* or *mawqūf* cannot be reliable without a chain of narration. The prestige of any person, scholar or *muḥaddith* cannot absolve them of their duty to mention their *isnād*. It was the condition of many companions that if another companion mentioned a *ḥadīth* to them, they would make them take an oath upon having heard it directly from the Prophet ﷺ. This is well-known regarding 'Alī ؓ. Our tradition has reached us with this extreme level of caution and care. Some *fuqahā'* and Sufi's have mentioned narrations in their books without a chain of narration for purposes of testimony and proof, for which scholars who came later authored books solely to mention the chains of narration. For example, *Naṣb ar-Rāyah fī Takhrīj Aḥādīth al-Hidāyah*, *At-Talkhīṣ al-Ḥabīr*, *Al-Mughnī 'an Ḥaml al-Asfār fī 'l-Asfār fī Takhrīj mā fī 'l-Iḥyā' min 'l-Akḥbār*.

During the time when printing presses never existed in the world, and the *muḥaddithūn* would narrate their *aḥādīth* from memory or from their original manuscripts, every person was responsible of listening to the *ḥadīth* with its chain, ensuring its preservation, and then mentioning the entire chain when narrating. However, now that the books of *ḥadīth* have been printed with the texts of the *aḥādīth* and their chains, the era of narrating from memory and hand written originals is no more. The narrator narrates from the printed book, and the student follows in the printed book. The authorship and ascription of these books to their authors has been well established. Thus, it is no longer necessary for the student or the *muḥaddith* to mention his *sanad* or preserve it to prove the authenticity of a narration. The part of the chain from the author to the Prophet ﷺ is already mentioned in the book.

In summary, it is sufficient in this day and age to give a reference to a particular book to prove the authenticity of a narration or to establish its fitness for purposes of proof. However, there is no doubt that the preservation of our *isnād* is a means of blessings and a source of pride. Therefore, it remained the practice of our teachers to mention their *asānīd* at the beginning of the year before commencing a book. Following in their footsteps, I will do the same.

We will now mention our *isnād*. It has already been mentioned that the *asānīd* of the subcontinental *muḥaddithūn* meet up at Shāh Waliyullāh ad-Dihlawī. It was the habit of Shaykh Zakariyyā to only mention his *sanad* up to Shāh Waliyullāh. He would then mention that Shāh Waliyullāh compiled his *asānīd* in a book and had it published, which is easily available. It is called *Al-Irshād ilā Muḥimmāt al-Isnād*.¹ He would further say that he has included one *sanad* of Shāh Waliyullāh in the introduction to *Awjaz al-Masālik*. Thus, we now have three sections to our *sanad*; the first from ourselves to Shāh Waliyullāh, the second from Shāh Waliyullāh to the author of the book, and the third from the author of the book to the Prophet ﷺ. The third section is mentioned inside the book. Thus, we only need to discuss the first section.²

My Sanad of Sunan Abī Dāwūd

I have studied *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* twice with two different teachers. The first time was in 1380 AH, which was the final year of my studies, and I studied it with the former principal of Maẓāhir 'Ulūm, Mawlānā As'adullāh Rāmpūrī ؓ. Thereafter, in 1388 AH when I taught *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* for the first time, I again studied it with Shaykh Zakariyyā.³

¹ Shāh Waliyullāh has another book detailing his *asānīd* called *Iṭḥāf an-Nabīh fī mā Yaḥtāju ilayh 'l-Muḥaddith wa 'l-Faqīh*.

² Refer to Shāh Waliyullāh's *sanad* for *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* on page 103.

³ How this transpired was during the preparation of *Lāmi' ad-Darārī*, Shaykh Zakariyyā would dictate to me and I would write, and a fixed amount of time would be spent daily in this way. The final volume was completed this year, and it happened to be the year I was given *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* to teach for the first time. Thus, after the completion of *Lāmi' ad-Darārī*, much of Shaykh's time was freed up. Shaykh informed me of his wish to explain to me the footnotes and marginal notes he had written in his copy of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* that he had taught from. I suggested that instead of studying the footnotes with him, I should study the actual book with him. Shaykh obliged and thus, I would study with him every day the amount I would teach in the madrasa. I completed the book with him before the end of the academic year. On the final day of teaching, there was a considerable amount left to cover. The entire *Kitāb al-Adab* was remaining. The night before I was due to finish teaching the book was a cold winter night, and I sat with Shaykh from after 'Ishā' until midnight and finished the book in this way. The other teachers of the final year had finished their books, and it was approximately the 29th or 30th of Rajab. I sat to teach in the first period, and completed the

My first Sanad

I narrate *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* from Mawlānā As'adullāh Rāmpūrī, who narrates from Mawlānā Yahyā Kāndhalwī, who narrates from Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī, who narrates from Shāh 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Mujaddidī, who narrates from his father Shāh Abū Sa'īd al-Mujaddidī, who narrates from Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz.

My Second Sanad

My second *sanad* is through Shaykh Zakariyyā, who has three *sanads*. Two of those are with recitation (قراءة), while the third is with permission only (إجازة). In 1334 AH, Shaykh Zakariyyā studied majority of the final year books with his father Mawlānā Yahyā Kāndhalwī. Thereafter, from 1335 AH onwards, he continuously studied majority of the final year books with Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī for several years.

Shaykh Zakariyyā's first Sanad

Shaykh Zakariyyā narrates *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* from his father Mawlānā Yahyā Kāndhalwī, who narrates from Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī, who narrates from Shāh 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Mujaddidī, who narrates from his father Shāh Abū Sa'īd al-Mujaddidī, who narrates from Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz.

Shaykh Zakariyyā's second Sanad

Shaykh Zakariyyā narrates *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* from Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī, who narrates from Mawlānā Maẓhar Nānotawī, who narrates from Mawlānā Mamlūk 'Alī Nānotawī, who narrates from Mawlānā Rashīd ad-Dīn Khān ad-Dihlawī, who narrates from Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz.

Shaykh Zakariyyā's third Sanad (permission only)

Shaykh Zakariyyā narrates *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* from Mawlānā 'Ināyat Ilāhī (the first principal of Maẓāhir 'Ulūm), who narrates from Mawlānā Aḥmad 'Alī Muḥaddith Sahāranpūrī, who narrates from Shāh Muḥammad Ishāq, who

book in the fourth period. After completing the book, I went to Shaykh and he congratulated me and made *du'a* for me. When I reached, Shaykh had sat down to eat, so I joined him as was my usual routine. It felt as if the whole time Shaykh's attention had been focused on my teaching. MA

narrates from Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz.

If we look closely at this third *sanad* of Shaykh Zakariyyā, we will notice that there is one less link in this chain up to Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz. This will be an elevated chain. These were the three chains of Shaykh Zakariyyā, in which only one chain of Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī was mentioned. Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī also has three chains. The first is the one that has already been mentioned above.

Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī's second Sanad

Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī has permission in *ḥadīth* from Shāh 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Mujaddidī, whose *sanad* has already been mentioned.

Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī's third Sanad

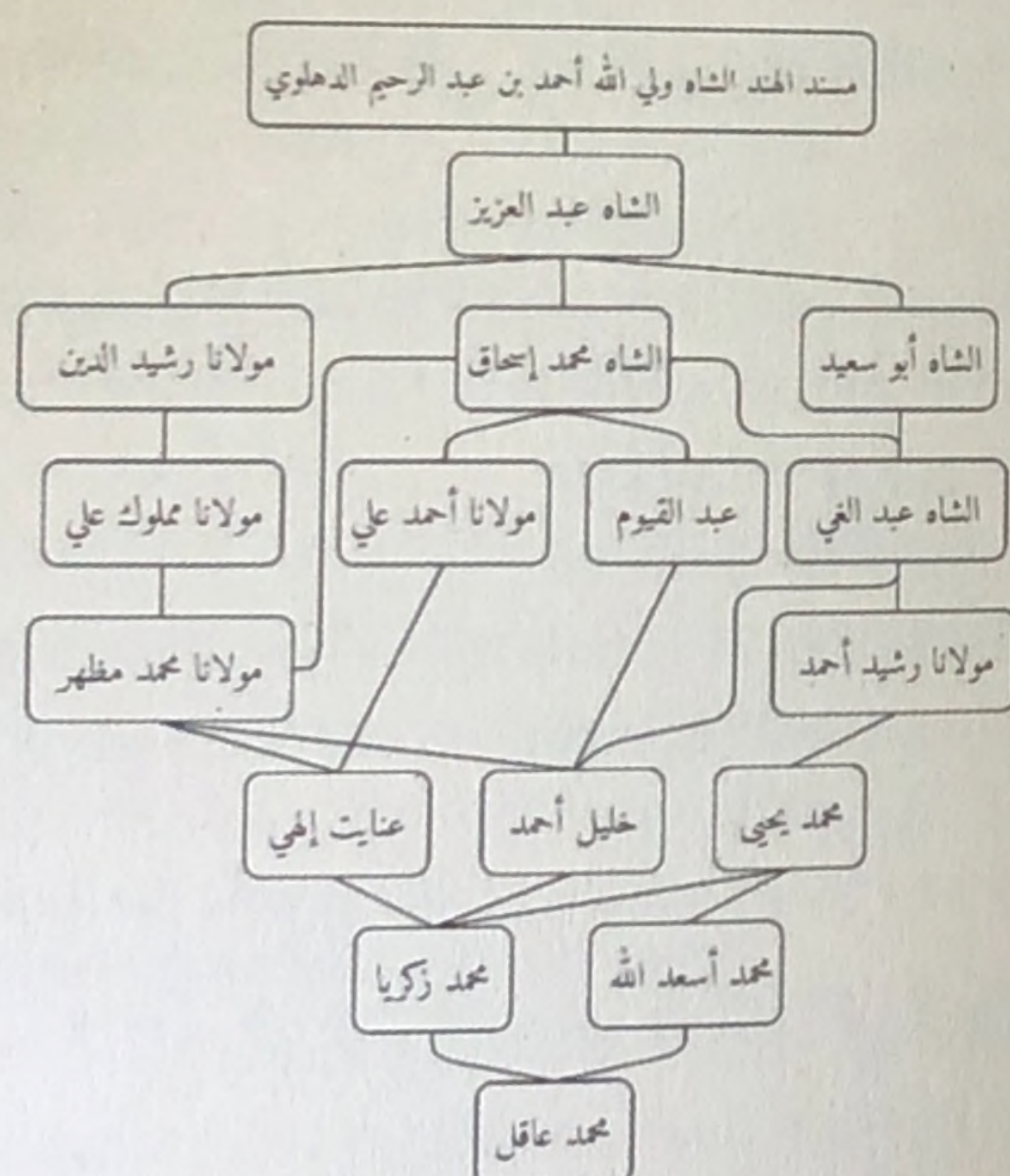
Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī studied *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* with Mawlānā 'Abd al-Qayyūm Budhānwī in the month of *Ramādān*. Mawlānā 'Abd al-Qayyūm Budhānwī is the grandson of Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz, and the student of Shāh Muḥammad Ishāq, whose *sanad* has previously been mentioned.

Besides these three chains, Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī acquired permission in *ḥadīth* from two scholars of Ḥijāz during the time he was there.

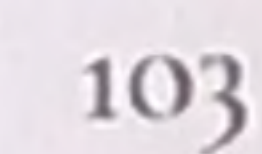
1. Shaykh Aḥmad Zaynī Dahlan
2. As-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Barzanjī

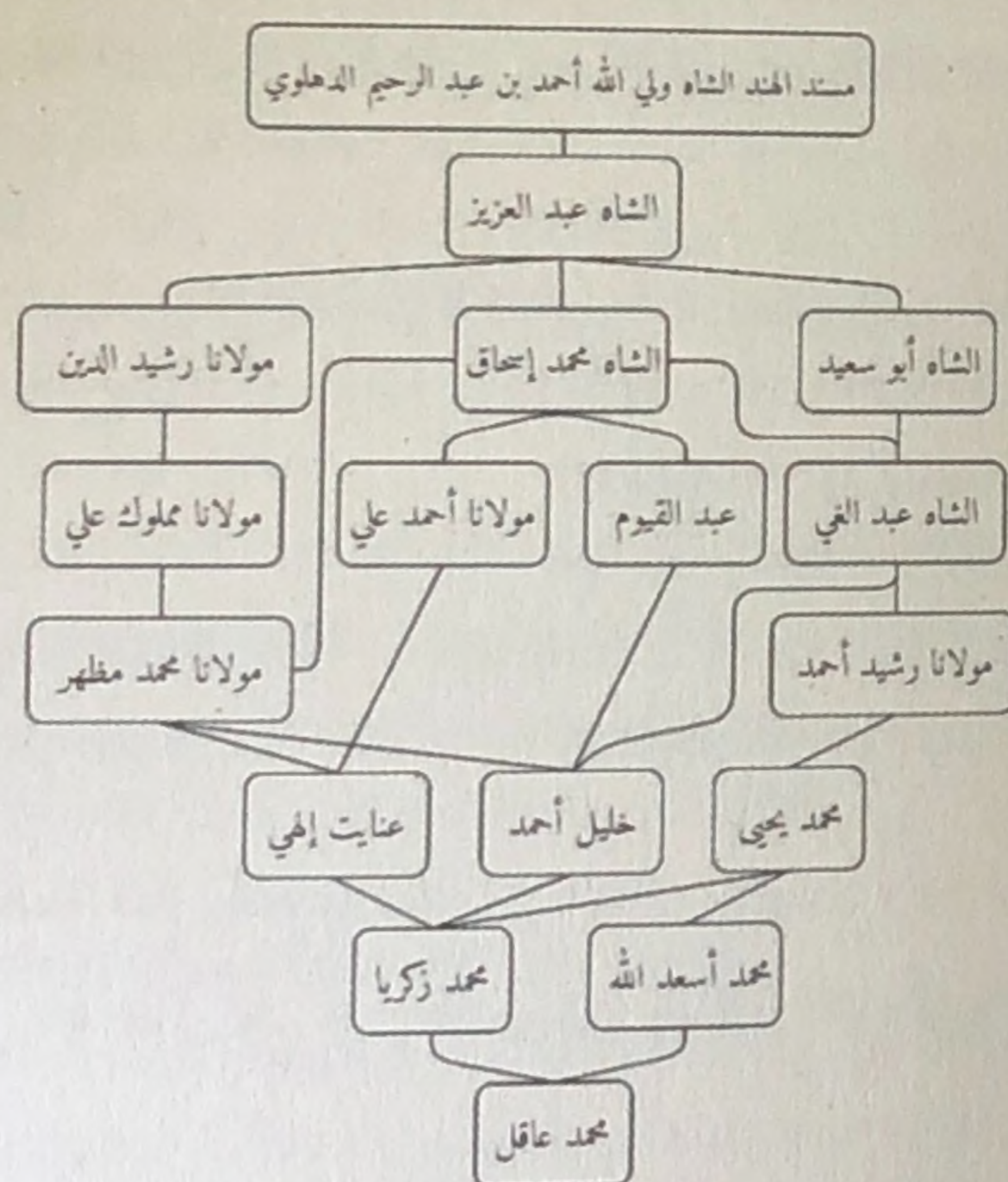
Thus, Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī has five chains in total. Two of those are with recitation, and the other three are with permission only.

قد تمت المبادئ من مقدمة العلم والكتاب والله ولي التوفيق والسداد وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين وصلى الله تعالى على خير خلقه سيدنا ومولانا محمد وآله وصحبه أجمعين

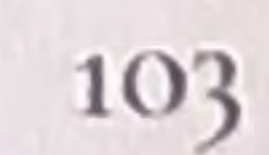


102





102



ABOUT THE BOOK

The science of *ḥadīth* with its multitude of branches is extremely vast. The *muḥaddithūn* gave their lives to this science; studying, teaching, explaining, and writing on various aspects of it. The beginner is often overwhelmed by its vastness, and thus scholars throughout the ages have written books to facilitate the study of this sacred science. This book is a translation of the introduction to *Ad-Durr al-Manḍūd 'alā Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad 'Āqil's Urdu commentary of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, which is effectively a transcription of his lectures on the *Sunan*. It aims to give the student the necessary tools before their journey into studying the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* and other books of *ḥadīth*. This book was prepared to ensure that the student is not overwhelmed by the sheer size of these voluminous books, unable to understand and derive any benefit from them, rather they are equipped with the necessary tools to maximise the benefit of studying these canonical books.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad 'Āqil is the Shaykh al-Ḥadīth at Maẓāhir 'Ulūm, Saharanpur and has been a senior lecturer of *ḥadīth* for the past 53 years. He studied *ḥadīth* with Shaykh Zakariyyā Kāndhalwī, Mawlānā Manẓūr Aḥmad Khan, Mawlānā As'adullāh Rāmpūrī, and Mawlānā Amīr Aḥmad Kāndhalwī. He assisted Shaykh Zakariyyā in compiling many of his works and also has many works in the field of *ḥadīth* himself, including extensive footnotes on the *ḥadīth* lectures of Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī.